

Bible Stories
with Questions
— and Helps

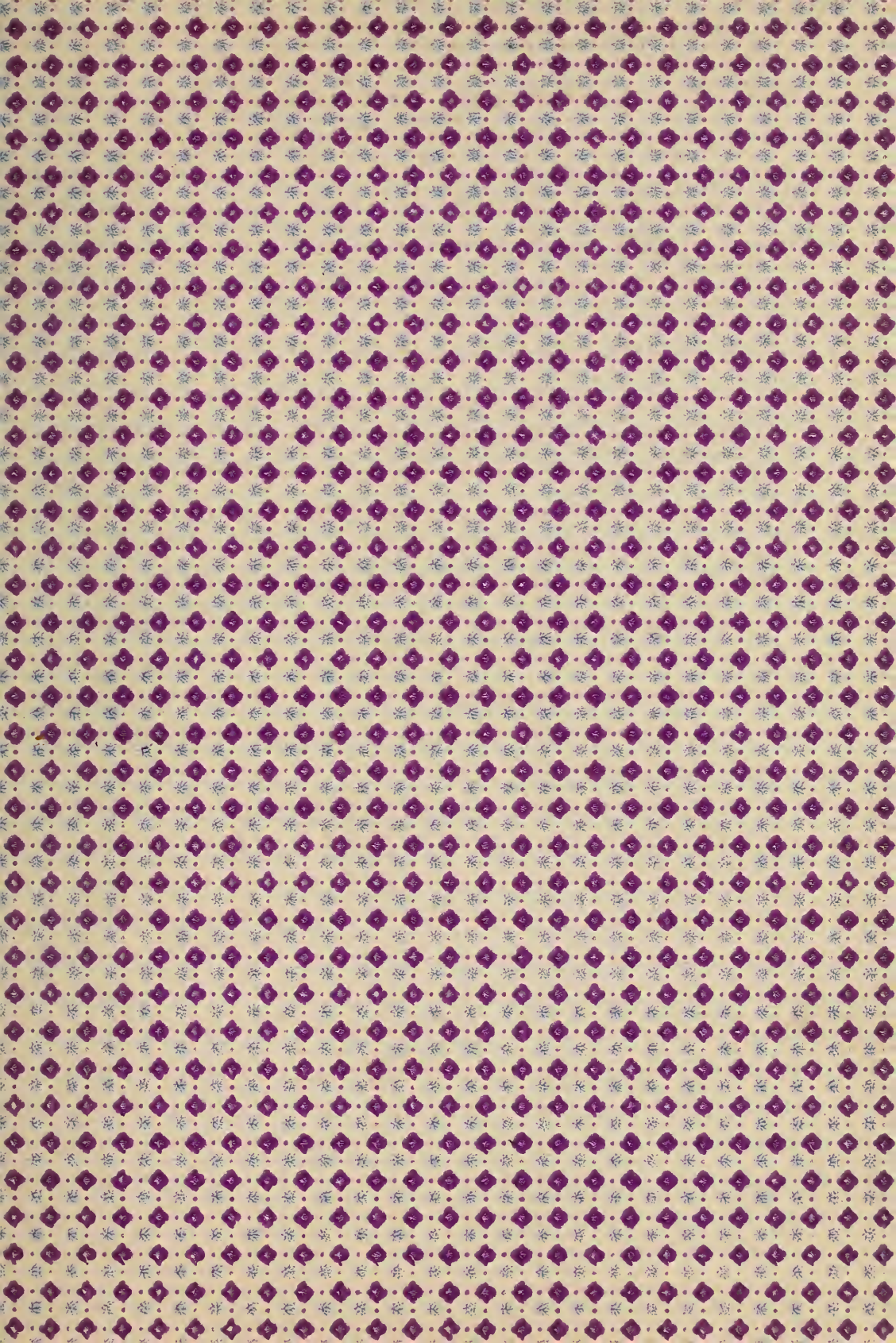


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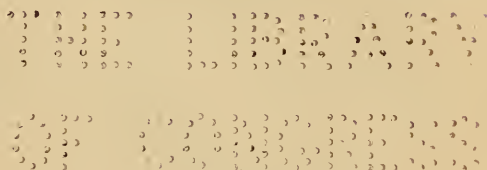
BIBLE STORIES

ARRANGED ACCORDING TO THE CHURCH YEAR
WITH QUESTIONS, APPLICATIONS AND HELPS.



Edited by

REV. M. VITZ, A. M.



CLEVELAND, O.

CENTRAL PUBLISHING HOUSE, 1134--1138 PEARL ST.,

1902.

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PREFACE.

Angew. Nov. 21/33

BIBLE STORIES is based on the celebrated work of Dr. Zahn, which is favorably known in Europe and this country, both for careful selection and excellent arrangement, as well as for its simple Bible language. Several years ago the late Rev. Dr. N. Gehr enhanced its usefulness by supplying questions and applications, and adding a sketch of Church History and other helps. There has been, for some time, a growing demand for an English edition adapted for Sabbath schools and catechetical classes in which both languages obtained. At the same time the English edition was to be complete in itself, so as to render possible its use where the English language prevails. The English, therefore, follows very closely the German edition. The questions and applications are translated and carry the same numbers, so that where both editions are used the same subjects may be readily found in both. The selections will prove an excellent introduction to the study of the Bible, while the language of the Scriptures, which is maintained throughout, will become familiar to the pupil. It is the hope and the prayer of its publishers as well as of the editor, that the English edition will prove a source of spiritual blessing to the young, as now for many years the German has, and thus magnify the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

M. V.

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OLD TESTAMENT STORIES.

I. THE CREATION.

Genesis 1.

¹In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
²And the earth as without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good: ⁴and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

⁵And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

⁶And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. ⁷And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas. ⁸And God said, Let the earth put forth grass, and herb and the fruit tree: and it was so. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

⁹And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly living creatures. ¹⁰And God created the great sea monsters, and every living creature after its kind, and every winged fowl. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply. And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth. ¹¹And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ¹²And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing. ¹³And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And ¹⁴on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work. And He blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because in it He rested from all His work.

¹ What did God create in the beginning?

² How was the appearance of the earth?

³ What did God say when He created light?

⁴ How did day and night arise?

⁵ What did God create on the second day?

⁶ What did God say on the third day?

⁷ What did God call the dry land and the gathering together of the waters?

⁸ What was the earth to bring forth?

⁹ What did God create on the fourth day?

¹⁰ What animals did God create on the fifth day?

¹¹ What did God say when He created man?

¹² How many persons did He create at first?

¹³ How was everything that God had created?

¹⁴ What did God do on the seventh day?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He pleased. (Ps. 115: 3.) Happy is that people,—happy is every single person,—whose God is the Lord. (Ps. 144: 15.)

2. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. (Heb. 11: 3.)

3. If you believe that the Creator of heaven and earth is your God and your Father, you will expect all good things from Him,

because He is able to give them as Almighty God, and willing, because He is a faithful Father.

Glory be to God on high,—
God, whose glory fills the sky.
Hail, by all Thy works adored!
Hail, the everlasting Lord!
Thee with thankful hearts we prove,—
God of power, and God of love!

2. THE GARDEN OF EDEN—PARADISE.

Genesis 2.

Thus the heavens and earth were finished: ¹And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. ²And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; ³the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and it was parted and became four heads: Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates.

And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ⁴Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: ⁵for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And when the Lord God had formed out of the ground all beasts of the earth, He brought them to the man to see what he would call them. ⁶And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for man there was not found an help meet for him. ⁷And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed his side with flesh. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made He a woman and brought her to the man. ⁸And the man said, This is now bone

of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife.—And they were both naked, the man and his wife and were not ashamed.

- ¹How did God create man?
- ²Where did He place him?
- ³What two trees receive particular mention?
- ⁴What command did God give to man?
- ⁵How was he to be punished if he did not obey?
- ⁶Why did God bring all beasts and fowls unto Adam?
- ⁷How did God create Eve, a help for Adam?
- ⁸What did Adam say when God brought Eve to him?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Remember that you have received body and soul from God, and that He created you so wonderfully. Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Cor. 6: 20.)

2. Remember that God did not create woman from the head of man to rule over him; nor from his feet, to be oppressed; but from a rib which lay near the heart, to be loved by him.

3. Remember that God created man good and in His own image, that he might rightly know God, his Creator, heartily love Him, and live with Him in eternal happiness, to glorify Him and to praise Him.

Come, worship at His throne,
Come, bow before the Lord:
We are His work and not our own;
He formed us by His word.

3. MAN'S FALL.

Genesis 3.

The serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field, and said unto the woman, ¹Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, ²We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, ³Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing

good and evil. ⁴And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband, and he did eat.

⁵And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. ⁶And Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him. Where art thou? And he said, 'I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And He said, 'Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou not eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And Adam said, ⁹The woman Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat. And God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? ¹⁰The woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And God said unto the serpent, ¹¹Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.  ¹²*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Unto the woman He said, ¹³In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam He said, ¹⁴Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground, out of which thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. ¹⁵And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them. And He sent them forth from the garden of Eden, and placed the cherubim with the flaming sword, to keep the way of the tree of life.

¹ What did the serpent say to the woman?

² What did the woman answer the serpent?

³ What did the serpent then say?

⁴ What did the woman now do?

- ⁵ What was the result?
- ⁶ Whose voice did Adam and Eve hear?
- ⁷ What was Adam's answer when the Lord called him?
- ⁸ What did the Lord say to him?
- ⁹ How did Adam try to excuse himself?
- ¹⁰ Upon whom did the woman try to put the blame?
- ¹¹ What did God say to the serpent?
- ¹² Repeat the first promise given in the Bible.
- ¹³ How was the woman punished?
- ¹⁴ What did God say to Adam?
- ¹⁵ What did God do with Adam and Eve?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Whenever several persons sin together they always try to turn the blame upon one another; yet they will all receive their punishment.
2. Never say "I could not help it, I had to do it," whenever you disobey God's commandment. Eve was tempted, it is true, but God looked upon her deed as wilful disobedience and punished her accordingly.
3. Through the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise, sin entered the world, and death, through sin.

Great God, create my heart anew,
 And form my spirit pure and true:
 Oh, make me wise betimes to see
 My danger and my remedy.
 Good is the Lord our God,
 His truth and mercy sure;
 While earth and heaven shall last,
 His promises endure.

4. CAIN AND ABEL.

Genesis 4, 5.

Adam and Eve had two sons, whose names were Cain and Abel. Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ¹It came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock. ²And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering; but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, ³Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou

not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

And Cain talked with his brother; ⁴and when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother and killed him. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? ⁵And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? ⁶And the Lord said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground it shall not yield unto thee its strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, ⁷My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the ground, and from Thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. Thus Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the Land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

And Cain's wife bare ⁸Enoch. And Cain builded a city and called it after the name of his son, Enoch. From Enoch is descended ^{*}Lamech, who took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other was Zillah. Adah bare ^{*}Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle. And his brother's name was ^{*}Jubal: from him are descended all such as handle the harp and the pipe. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain the artificer in brass and iron.

Eve again bare a son and called him Seth: ⁹For, said she, God hath appointed me another son instead of Abel whom Cain slew. ¹⁰Cain's descendants feared not the Lord their God and they were called the sons of men; ¹¹but Seth's descendants feared God, and they were called the sons of God, to whom God revealed His will. They began to call upon the name of the Lord, for many forsook the Lord their God. Such a son of God was Enoch. ¹²He proclaimed in the name of God to the fallen world, Behold, the Lord cometh with many thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all

ungodly. ¹³Because he led a godly life God took him up into heaven, so that he saw not death. But ¹⁴Adam died when he was 930 years old, after he had seen children and children's children. ¹⁵His great grandson Methuselah was even 969 years old, ¹⁶whose son's name was Lamech. Lamech named his son Noah and said, This same shall comfort us for our work and toil on earth which the Lord had cursed.

- ¹ What offering did the two brothers bring unto God?
- ² Upon whose offering did the Lord look with favor?
- ³ What did the Lord say to Cain who was very wroth?
- ⁴ What did Cain do unto his brother?
- ⁵ What reply did he make when the Lord asked him, Where is thy brother Abel?
- ⁶ What did the Lord then say?
- ⁷ What was Cain's reply?
- ⁸ Repeat the names of the descendants of Cain.
- ⁹ What did Eve say when Seth was born?
- ¹⁰ What do the Scriptures say of Cain's descendants?
- ¹¹ What praise is given to the descendants of Seth?
- ¹² What did the godly Enoch do?
- ¹³ How did God reward his godliness?
- ¹⁴ How old was Adam when he died?
- ¹⁵ How old was his great grandson Methuselah?
- ¹⁶ What was the name of Methuselah's son and his son's son?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Two persons may do the same good work; yet God may reject the work of the one while He looks with favor upon that of the other. For those only are good works which are done from true faith, according to the law of God and for His glory.

2. Envy, hatred, anger and desire for revenge are great sins and form the root and motive of murder.

3. However secretly evil may be done, God hears it, God sees it, God punishes it; you cannot escape from Him.

Our God is love! and all His saints
 His image bear below;
 The heart with love to God inspired,
 With love to man shall glow.
 Oh, may we love each other, Lord,
 As we are loved of Thee:
 For none are truly born of God
 Who live in enmity.

5. THE FLOOD.

Genesis 6-9.

Men began to multiply on the face of the earth. And the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose. And the Lord said, 'My spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he also is flesh. Yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years. And when the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was evil continually, it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And He said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth.

²But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, for Noah was a righteous man in his generation, and walked with God. And God said unto Noah, ³The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them from the earth. ⁴Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is how thou shalt make it: The length 300 cubits, the breadth fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits; a window and a door shalt thou make in the ark, and three stories. And thou shalt bring into the ark all kinds of beasts, of fowls, cattle and creeping things; and shalt take for thyself and for them of all food that is eaten. Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him.

And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark: for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. ⁵And he entered the ark with his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and his wife and the wives of his sons. And all kinds of beasts went to him in pairs into the ark, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in. ⁶On the seventeenth day of the second month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And the waters increased greatly upon the earth, so that all the high mountains were covered. Fifteen cubits did the waters cover the mountains. And all flesh died, fowls, cattle, beasts,

and every man. ⁷And the waters prevailed an hundred and fifty days.

And God remembered Noah. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged and returned from off the earth. ⁸On the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen. At the end of forty days Noah opened the window and sent forth a raven, which went to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Thereafter he sent forth a dove. But the dove found no rest for her foot, and returned unto him, and Noah put forth his hand and brought her into the ark. He stayed yet other seven days and again sent forth a dove, which returned to him at eventide; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off. Noah stayed yet other seven days and sent forth a dove, and she returned not again unto him.

Noah now removed the covering of the ark. And the earth was dry on the twenty-seventh day of the second month. And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou and thy wife, thy sons and thy sons' wives, and every living thing that is with thee. ⁹And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord said, ¹⁰I will not again curse the ground for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. And God blessed Noah and his sons and said, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. Behold, I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall there any more be flood. ¹¹I do set my bow in the cloud and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

¹ What did the Lord say of the people when they began to multiply?

² What does our lesson say of Noah?

³ What did the Lord say to him?

⁴ What kind of ark or boat was Noah commanded to build?

⁵ Who went into the ark with Noah, according to the command of the Lord?

⁶ What happened when Noah and his family were in the ark?

⁷ How long did the waters continue to rise?

⁸ When and where did the ark come to rest?

⁹ What did Noah do when he had left the ark?

¹⁰ What did the Lord say?

¹¹ What was the sign with which God confirmed His covenant?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Whenever man lives according to the will of the flesh, and the Spirit of God will no longer strive with him, he hurries straightway to destruction.

2. Even in evil times and among wicked people, one may lead a pious life through the grace of God. Noah is an example.

3. The Lord always watches over His children and knows how to save them in a wonderful way, whenever the wicked people meet destruction.

4. Never forget to bring a thank-offering you owe your Saviour, whenever He has helped and saved you from spiritual or bodily distress.

Yet, clouds will intervene,
And all my prospect flies;
Like Noah's dove I flit between
Rough seas and stormy skies.
Anon the clouds depart,
The winds and waters cease;
While sweetly o'er my gladdened heart
Expands the bow of peace.

6. THE TOWER OF BABEL.

Genesis 9-11.

Noah began to be an husbandman, and planted a vineyard. ¹And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years, that all his days were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died. ²And his sons, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, Ham, and Japheth; of these was the earth overspread with people, after the flood. ³The children of Shem remained in Asia, and God was with them. ⁴The children of Japheth went mostly to the West, to the islands and to Europe. ⁵The children of Ham went to the regions of the South and to torrid Africa. ⁶From Ham, Nimrod descended, who began to be a mighty one in the earth, and a mighty hunter. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel.

But the whole earth was of one language. And it came to pass, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to

another, Go to, let us make brick and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime for mortar. ⁷Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. ⁸And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and nothing will be withholden from them which they purpose to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. ⁹Therefore was the name of it called Babel, because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth and from thence did scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

- ¹ How old was Noah when he died?
- ² What were the names of his sons?
- ³ Where did the children of Shem continue to dwell?
- ⁴ Where did the children of Japheth go?
- ⁵ Where did the children of Ham settle?
- ⁶ Who was the founder of Babel?
- ⁷ Why did the people intend to build a tower?
- ⁸ How was the building of the tower stopped?
- ⁹ Why was the city and the tower called Babel?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Nothing can prosper that is undertaken against the will and plans of God. The people had intended to stay together; it was God's will that they should spread out and replenish the earth.
2. No matter how great and noble a work may be, if it is done merely for the sake of vain-glory, and to make a name, it is an abomination in the sight of God.
3. Remember that our actions are not to glorify ourselves, but God's holy name forever.

Let not the world engage our love,
Nor cares our bosoms fill;
But fix our hearts on things above,
That we may do Thy will.

7. THE CALLING OF ABRAHAM.

Genesis 11-14.

¹Terah, a descendant of Shem, lived at Ur of the Chaldees. ²And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife — who had no child — and went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the Land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there. ³But Terah served other gods. Josh. 24: 2. And the Lord said unto Abram,  ⁴*Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make thee a great nation, and will bless thee, and make thy name great; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*

So Abram went, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old. ⁵When they had come into that land, Abram passed through unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. The Canaanites dwelt then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, ⁶Unto thy seed will I give this land. And there builded he an altar. ⁷Thereafter he removed from thence unto the mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, and builded there an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. ⁸But a famine came into the land, and Abram went down into Egypt, for the famine was sore in the land. And Pharaoh treated Abram well; and he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and menservants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels.

And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and Lot with him. ⁹And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold; and he came to Bethel, unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at first, and called on the name of the Lord. Lot also had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them. And there was a strife between Abram's herdmen and Lot's herdmen. ¹⁰And Abram said unto Lot, let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and my herdmen and thy herdmen; is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou take the right hand, then I will go to the left. So Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan and pitched his tent toward Sodom. ¹¹Now the

men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against the Lord exceedingly. After Lot was separated from Abram, the Lord said unto him, Look northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; all the land which thou seest I will give to thee.

¹²And it came to pass that Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and the kings that were with him, made war with the king of Sodom. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way, and took Lot with them. ¹³When Abram heard this, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants, and pursued them and brought back all the goods and Lot.—¹⁴When he returned from the slaughter of the kings, Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine: and he was priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hands. And Abram gave him a tenth of all his goods. ¹⁵And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons and take the goods for thyself. But Abram said, I lift up my hand unto the Lord God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread nor a shoe-latchet nor aught that is thine, lest thou shouldst say that thou hadst made Abram rich: save only the men who went with me, let them take their portion.

¹ Who was Terah, and where did he dwell?

² Whom did he take with him when he went to Haran?

³ What gods did Terah serve?

⁴ What did God say to Abram?

⁵ Into what land did he and Lot go?

⁶ What was the promise the Lord gave Abram when He appeared unto him?

⁷ Where did he then go and what did he do there?

⁸ Why did he go to Egypt?

⁹ Where did he go when he went up out of Egypt?

¹⁰ How did Abram become a peacemaker?

¹¹ Among what kind of people did Lot now dwell?

¹² What happened to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah?

¹³ What did Abram do when he heard of it?

¹⁴ Who went out to meet Abram when he returned a victor?

¹⁵ How did Abram prove his unselfishness?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Abram's call was a pure act of grace of God. His whole father's house was given to the service of strange gods, while the only true God revealed Himself to Abram.

2. Abram obeyed the voice of God. He left his country, his kindred, and his father's house, without knowing just where he was to go; and this was an act of faith.

3. Abram was rich; yet it was not on account of his wealth, but on account of his faith and piety that he pleased God and became famous in history.

He leadeth me! Oh blessed thought!
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.
Lord! I would clasp Thy hand in mine,
Nor ever murmur, nor repine;
Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.

8. ISAAC IS PROMISED.

Genesis 15-18.

After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram, ¹Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, ²O Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless. And the Lord commanded him to go out, and said, ³Look toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to tell them. And He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. ⁴Abram believed the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness. In that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates.

Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children, after he had already dwelt ten years in Canaan and had received the promise. Only Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid, bare Ishmael, when Abram was eighty-six years old. ⁵Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said unto him, I am God Almighty; walk before me and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee and I will multiply thee exceedingly, ⁶and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. Therefore shall thy name no more be called Abram (a high father), but Abraham (father of a multitude); kings also shall come out of thee. And Sarai shall bear thee a son. And thou shalt no more call her Sarai (my princess), but Sarah (princess) shall be her name. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart,

Shall a child be born unto me that is an hundred years old, and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

And the Lord again appeared unto Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. ⁷And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, lo three men stood over against him. ⁸And when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself to the earth, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. Let now a little water be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your heart, after that ye shall pass on. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes. And he ran unto the herd and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto the servant, who hastened to dress it, and he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, In the tent. And he said, ⁹I will return unto thee when the season cometh round; and, lo, Sarah shall have a son. ¹⁰Sarah heard it in the tent door which was behind him, and she laughed within herself. And the Lord said unto Abraham, ¹¹Wherefore did Sarah laugh? Is anything too hard for the Lord?

¹ What did the Lord say to Abram?

² What was Abram's answer?

³ What did God command Abram to do, and what was His promise?

⁴ How did Abram receive this promise?

⁵ What did God say to Abram when he was ninety-nine years old?

⁶ Why did the Lord change his name from Abram to Abraham?

⁷ How did the Lord appear to Abraham in the plains of Mamre?

⁸ How did Abraham receive the strangers?

⁹ What did the Lord say to Abraham about Sarah?

¹⁰ What did Sarah do when she heard it?

¹¹ What did the Lord then say?

APPLICATIONS.

1. As God Himself first revealed in Paradise the Gospel, the promise of the Redeemer (Gen. 3: 15), afterwards published by the holy Patriarchs and Prophets, and foreshadowed by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law, He also repeated several times, in various ways, the promise of Isaac to Abraham, in order to strengthen him in faith.

2. Abraham's faith was of the right kind, for he believed in God's simple word, believed in spite of nature and reason, believed in hope against hope.

3. With God all things are possible; also with him who believes.

God of all power, and truth, and grace,
Which shall from age to age endure;
Whose word, when heav'n and earth shall pass away,
Remains and stands forever sure.
Give me a new, a perfect heart,
From doubt, and fear, and sorrow free;
The mind which was in Christ impart,
And let my spirit cleave to Thee.

9. THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

Genesis 18, 19.

¹The three men, who had been with Abraham, rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom. Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. And the Lord said, ²Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do; seeing that all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? for I know him that he will command his children that they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. And the Lord said, ³The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and their sin is very grievous. And the men went toward Sodom; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord and said, ⁴Wilt Thou consume the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous in the city: wilt Thou not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? ⁵The Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous, then will I spare all the place for their sake. Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt Thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And He said, I will not destroy it, if I find there be forty and five. And he continued and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And He said, I will not do it for the forty's sake. Abraham said, Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And He said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I

have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And He said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. And Abraham said, Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And He said, ⁶I will not destroy it for the ten's sake. And the Lord went His way, as soon as He had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

The two angels came to Sodom at even. ⁷And Lot sat in the gate. And when he saw them he rose up and bowed himself, and said, Turn aside, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, wash your feet, and tomorrow you shall go on your way. And they said, Nay, but we will abide in the street all night. And he urged them greatly, and they turned in unto him; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat. ⁸But before they lay down the men of the city of Sodom surrounded the house, young and old, all the people, and said, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out. Lot went out and shut the door after him, and said, I pray you, my brethren, do not so wickedly. ⁹And they said, Stand back. This one fellow came to sojourn and he will needs be a judge. And they pressed sore upon Lot and drew near to break the door: ¹⁰but the men brought Lot into the house, and shut the door. ¹¹And they smote the men at the door with blindness, so that they could not find the door.

And the men said unto Lot, Whomsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of the place for the Lord hath sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out and said unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, ¹²Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed unto them as one that mocked. And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, lest thou, too, be consumed.

And Lot said, ¹³Oh Lord, Thou hast magnified Thy mercy; I cannot escape to the mountains, lest evil overtake me, and I die: Behold, this city is near, and is a little one. oh, let me escape thither. And He said, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also; haste thee, escape thither: for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore this city was called Zoar (smallness). The sun was risen upon the earth

when Lot came unto Zoar. ¹⁴Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire out of heaven, and overthrew those cities and all the plain. ¹⁵But his wife looked back, and became a pillar of salt. And Abraham went up early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord, and looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and, lo, the smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a furnace. But Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountain, for he feared to dwell in Zoar, and dwelt in a cave with his two daughters. ¹⁶And from Lot are descended the Moabites and the Ammonites.

¹ Where did the strangers go after they had finished their meal?

² What did the Lord say to Abraham?

³ What did the Lord say about Sodom and Gomorrah?

⁴ How did Abraham intercede in behalf of the doomed cities?

⁵ What answer did he receive?

⁶ How small was the number of righteous found?

⁷ Who received the two angels at the gate?

⁸ What did the wicked people of the city do?

⁹ How did they treat Lot when he opposed them?

¹⁰ Who helped Lot?

¹¹ How were the evil-doers punished?

¹² What did Lot say to his sons-in-law?

¹³ For what had Lot asked in particular?

¹⁴ What happened when the sun was risen?

¹⁵ What became of Lot's wife?

¹⁶ What nations descended from Lot?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares (Heb. 13: 2), as did Abraham and Lot. Do likewise.

2. God is terribly displeased with our original as well as actual sins; and will punish them in His just judgment, temporally and eternally. Punishment will surely come, however slowly.

3. If you have once left the spiritual Sodom, the world with its sinful lusts, do not stand still, do not look back, seek refuge in the wounds of Jesus. Remember Lot's wife!

Alas, what hourly dangers rise!

What snares beset my way!

To heaven, oh, let me lift mine eyes,

And hourly watch and pray.

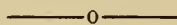
Oh gracious God! in whom I live,

My feeble efforts aid;

Help me to watch, and pray, and strive,

Though trembling and afraid.

Oh, keep me in Thy heavenly way,
And bid the tempter flee!
And let me never, never stray
From happiness and Thee.



10. ISAAC'S BIRTH AND OFFERING.

Genesis 21, 22.

¹Abraham journeyed from thence to the land of the south and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur. And the Lord visited Sarah, and she bare Abraham a son at the set time, of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son Isaac, and circumcised him when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was an hundred years old.

²God proved Abraham again and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And God said, Take Isaac thine only son whom thou lovest, and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon a mountain which I will tell thee. ³And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And he said unto his young men, ⁴Abide ye here with the ass; I and the lad will go yonder, and we will worship and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took in his hand the fire and a knife. And they went both of them together. Then Isaac said, My father. Abraham said, Here am I, my son. And he said, ⁵Behold, the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? And Abraham said, ⁶My son, God will provide Himself the lamb for a burnt offering. So they went both of them together. ⁷And when they came to the place which God had told him of, Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood, and stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

⁸And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And He said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad. For now I know

that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thine only son from me. ⁹And Abraham lifted up his eyes and beheld behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and he went and took the ram, and offered him up in the stead of his son. ¹⁰And Abraham called the place Jehovah-jireh (the Lord seeth). And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said, ¹¹By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thine only son, that I will bless thee and multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. ¹²So Abraham returned to his young men; and they rose up and went together to Beersheba and dwelt there.

¹ Where did Abraham dwell when Isaac was born?

² How did God try Abraham?

³ What did Abraham do?

⁴ What did he say to his servants on the third day?

⁵ What did Isaac say to his father?

⁶ What was his father's answer?

⁷ How did Abraham intend to carry out the sacrifice?

⁸ Who stopped him?

⁹ What did Abraham sacrifice in Isaac's stead?

¹⁰ What name did Abraham give to the place?

¹¹ What did the angel of the Lord call unto Abraham?

¹² In what place did Abraham dwell after he had returned with Isaac and his men?

APPLICATIONS.

1. God tries the faith of His children in many ways, in order that it may shine more brightly and be proved.

2. True faith clings fast to the Word of God without doubting, even if all outward circumstances seem to testify against it. Abraham believed God could raise up children unto him out of stones.

3. The greater the trial, the stronger is faith if it endures. To render only little sacrifices and to shrink back from great ones shows a weak faith.

Faith is the brightest evidence

Of things beyond our sight,

Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense

And dwells in heav'nly light.

By faith, we know the worlds were made

By God's almighty word:

Abram to unknown countries led

By faith, obeyed the Lord.

II. ISAAC AND REBECCA.

Genesis 23-26.

¹Sarah was one hundred and twenty-seven years old and died in Hebron. And Abraham wept for her. ²After this, he buried her in the cave of the field, which he had bought of Ephron the Hittite for a burying place. Abraham was old and well stricken in age: and the Lord had blessed him in all things. And he said unto his eldest servant Eliezer, that ruled over all that he had, ³I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, but shall go unto Mesopotamia to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac. The Lord shall send his angel before thee. Only thou shalt not bring my son thither again. Then Eliezer swore to him concerning this. ⁴And he took ten camels and all kinds of goodly things of his master; and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made the camels to kneel down without the city by the well of water at the time of evening that women go out to draw water, and said, ⁵Lord, show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water; if now a damsel cometh to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that Thou hast appointed for Thy servant Isaac.

And before he had done speaking, behold, ⁶Rebecca came out, the daughter of Bethuel, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And she was very fair to look upon. And she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And Eliezer ran to meet her, and said, Let me drink a little water of thy pitcher. ⁷And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw for thy camels also. And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again to the well to draw, and drew for all his camels. Eliezer wondered at her; holding his peace, to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not. ⁸When the camels had done drinking, he took a golden ring and two bracelets for her hands, and said, Whose daughter art thou? is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Beth-

uel; we have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. ⁹And the man bowed his head, and worshiped the Lord, and said, Blessed be God who led me to the house of my masters' brethren. And Rebecca ran and told her mother's house these things.

¹⁰When Laban, Rebecca's brother, saw the ring and the bracelets upon his sister's hands, and heard the words of Rebecca, he ran out to Eliezer and said, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord: wherefore standest thou without? I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. And brought the man into the house, and ungirded the camels and gave them straw and provender, and to Eliezer water to wash his feet, and set meat before him to eat. But he said, ¹¹I will not eat until I have told mine errand. And they said, Speak on. Then Eliezer told all that had happened, and said, And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. ¹²Then Laban and Bethuel answered, The thing proceedeth from the Lord. Rebecca is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken. When Eliezer heard their words, he bowed himself down to the earth unto the Lord, and brought forth jewels of silver and of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebecca, but to her brother and mother he gave precious things. ¹³In the morning, he rose up and said, Send me away; hinder me not. ¹⁴And they called Rebecca, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebecca, and her nurse; and they blessed her and said, be thou the mother of thousands of ten thousands. And Rebecca arose and rode upon the camels, and went with Eliezer. ¹⁵Isaac had gone out to meditate in the field at the eventide; and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, there were camels coming. And Rebecca lifted up her eyes, and saw Isaac. And she said unto Eliezer, What man is that walketh in the field to meet us? Eliezer said, It is my master. And he told Isaac everything. ¹⁶Isaac then brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and she became his wife, and he loved her. Thus was Isaac comforted after his mother's death.

¹ Where did Sarah die and how old was she?

² Where was she buried?

³ What did Abraham say to his oldest servant Eliezer?

⁴ How did Eliezer enter upon his journey to Mesopotamia?

⁵ What did he ask in prayer of God when he rested at a well?

- ⁶ Who came to the well while he was yet praying?
⁷ What did Rebecca say when Eliezer asked her for a drink of water?
⁸ What presents did he then give her?
⁹ What did Eliezer do when he learned that she was Bethuel's daughter?
¹⁰ What did Laban do when Rebecca told him what had happened?
¹¹ What did Eliezer wish to say before he would eat?
¹² What answer did he receive?
¹³ What did Eliezer say when he arose in the morning?
¹⁴ What did Rebecca's parents do?
¹⁵ What did Isaac do when he saw the bridal party?
¹⁶ Where did Isaac bring his bride?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Pious parents see to it that their children are not united unequally, are not married to godless persons.
2. It is a great good fortune to have faithful servants, to whom all things can be entrusted and who do everything with God.
3. If you notice that anything comes from the Lord, let no one interfere. Let the will of the Lord be done.
4. Those are the happiest marriages that are solemnized in prayer, according to the advice of experienced people and with the consent of the parents.

Teach me, my God and King,
 Thy will in all to see;
 And what I do in anything,
 To do it as for Thee.

—o—

12. JACOB AND ESAU.

Genesis 25-27.

Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebecca to be his wife. But she had no children. So Isaac entreated the Lord who heard him. And the Lord said unto Rebecca, ¹Thou shalt have two sons, and the elder shall serve the younger. And when the time came Rebecca bare twins. ²The first was red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called him Esau. The second, they named Jacob. ³And Esau was a hunter, a man of the field; ⁴but Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents. ⁵Now Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his venison, and Rebecca loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage. ⁶And Esau

came in from the field, and was faint, and said unto Jacob, Feed me with that red pottage. Jacob said, sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, behold I am at the point to die : what profit shall the birthright do to me ? And Jacob said, swear this to me. And he sware unto him. Thus Esau despised his birthright. ⁷When Esau was forty years old, he took to wife two of the Hittites, which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebecca.

When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called Esau, and said, ⁸Take thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field and take me venison and make me savory meat such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat ; that my soul may bless thee before I die. Rebecca heard these words. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison. ⁹And Rebecca said unto Jacob, Go now to the flock, and fetch me two good kids, and I will make them savory meat for thy father, such as he loveth. Thou shalt bring it to thy father that he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death. ¹⁰But Jacob said to Rebecca his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man ; my father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver. And his mother said unto him, Only obey my voice and go fetch me them. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother. ¹¹His mother now made savory meat, such as his father loved, and took the goodly raiment of Esau, which were with her in the house and put them upon Jacob. But the skins of the kids she put upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck, and gave the savory meat into Jacob's hands. And he came unto his father and said, My father : and he said, Here I am ; who art thou, my son ? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau ; I have done according as thou badest me : arise, set and eat of my venison. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near that I may feel thee my son. ¹²And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father ; and when he felt him, he said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not ; and he did eat and drink. ¹³Thereupon he blessed him and said, God give thee plenty of corn and wine. Let peoples serve thee ; be a lord over thy brethren.

Now when Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from his presence, Esau came in from his hunting. He also made savory meat and brought

it unto his father and said unto him, Let my father arise and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. ¹⁴And Isaac trembled very exceedingly and said, Who? Where then is he that hath hunted venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all, before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea and he shall be blessed. When Esau heard this, he cried an exceeding great and bitter cry, and said, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? and lifted up his voice and wept. And Isaac said, Behold, of the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling: by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother. ¹⁵And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing and said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; for I will slay my brother Jacob. ¹⁶And Rebecca said, Jacob, arise, flee thou to Laban my brother, and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away from thee. ¹⁷And Isaac blessed him and said, God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and give thee the blessing of Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob, and he went to Padanaram (Mesopotamia) unto Laban.

- ¹ What did the Lord say unto Rebecca?
- ² What names were given to the two sons?
- ³ What did Esau become?
- ⁴ What kind of man was Jacob, and what did he do?
- ⁵ Which one was Isaac's, and which one Rebecca's favorite?
- ⁶ What trade did the brothers make?
- ⁷ What else is related of Esau?
- ⁸ When Isaac had grown old, what did he say to Esau?
- ⁹ What did Rebecca then do?
- ¹⁰ What was Jacob's reply?
- ¹¹ How did Rebecca help Jacob over his scruples?
- ¹² What did Isaac say when Jacob came to him?
- ¹³ What blessing did Isaac give Jacob?
- ¹⁴ What did Isaac say when Esau asked him for a blessing?
- ¹⁵ What did Esau do, when he saw that he was deceived?
- ¹⁶ How did Rebecca set at naught the threats of Esau?
- ¹⁷ How did Isaac send away Jacob?

APPLICATIONS.

1. To exchange spiritual gifts for temporal pleasures discloses a low mind. The firstborn had great privileges.

2. Hurtful results will follow if parents give unseemly preference to one child above another. Isaac knew that the elder was to serve the younger, and yet he preferred Esau to Jacob.

3. Rebecca was on God's side; yet her impatient attempt to hasten His plans by means of cunning and fraud was displeasing in His sight. Punishment did not fail to come. The brothers were estranged from each other, Jacob became a fugitive and Rebecca never saw her favorite again.

Lord, shower upon us from above
The sacred gift of mutual love;
Each other's wants may we supply,
And reign together in the sky.

13. JACOB FLEES TO PADANARAM (MESOPOTAMIA).

Genesis 28, 29.

¹Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran, and lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. And he took a stone and put it under his head, and lay down to sleep. ²And he dreamed. And behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood above it, and said, ³I am the Lord the God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac.  *The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land.* ⁴And when Jacob awoke out of his sleep he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. ⁵And Jacob rose up early in the morning and set up the stone for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it, and called the name of that place Bethel. And Jacob made a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God.

Then Jacob lifted up his feet, and came to the land in the east; ⁶and behold, there was a well in the field, and three flocks of sheep lying there by it, and the stone upon the well's mouth was great. And they rolled the stone from the well's mouth.

And Jacob said, My brethren, whence be ye? They answered, Of Haran are we. ⁷And he said, Know ye Laban, the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him; behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. ⁸When Jacob saw Rachel, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, he went near and rolled the stone away from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban, and kissed Rachel, and wept, and told her that he was her father's brother, and Rebecca's son. And she ran and told her father. ⁹When Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house.

¹ Where did Jacob go when he left Beersheba?

² What did he see at night in his dream?

³ What promise did the Lord give him?

⁴ What did Jacob say when he awoke?

⁵ What did he do and what did he vow?

⁶ Where did Jacob come when he journeyed farther east?

⁷ For whom did he inquire of the shepherds of Haran?

⁸ What did Jacob do when he met Rachel?

⁹ What did Laban do when he heard of his sister's son?

APPLICATIONS.

1. God shows his elect renewed grace, if they repent of their wrongs; He will never repent of His purpose.

2. There is no place where God is not present; but only he who fears Him knows it and experiences it. Jacob knew it not, because he had not yet become a spiritual man.

3. It is a beautiful custom for relatives to greet and entertain one another gladly.

Though like a wanderer,
 The sun gone down,
 Darkness be over me,
 My rest a stone;
 Yet in my dreams I'd be
 Nearer, my God, to Thee,
 Nearer to Thee.
 Then, with my waking thoughts
 Bright with Thy praise,
 Out of my stony griefs
 Bethel I'll raise;
 So by my woes to be
 Nearer, my God, to Thee,
 Nearer to Thee!

14. JACOB AND LABAN.

Genesis 29-31.

When Jacob had tarried with Laban for a month, Laban said, ¹Shouldest thou serve me for nought? Tell me, what shall thy wages be? Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah's eyes were tender; but Rachel was beautiful and well favored. And Jacob said, ²I will serve thee seven years for Rachel. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days; for the love he had to her. ³Now when the seven years had passed, Laban gave him Leah instead of Rachel. And Jacob said, ⁴Wherefore hast thou beguiled me? Laban answered, ⁵It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. I will give thee the other also, for the service which thou shalt serve me with yet seven other years. Jacob did so. Then Laban gave him Rachel to wife.

Now Jacob had twelve sons, ⁶Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin. And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wives and my children, that I may go unto mine own country. ⁷Laban said unto him, I have divined, that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it. And Jacob asked Laban for the spotted and speckled sheep, and goats, and all that should be speckled and spotted. And Laban said, Let it be according to thy word. ⁸And God blessed Jacob that he increased exceedingly, and had large flocks, maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.

And the Lord said unto Jacob, ⁹Return unto the land of thy fathers, and I will be with thee. And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field and said unto them, ¹⁰I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as beforetime; and ye know that with all my power I have served your father; and he hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times. But God suffered him not to hurt me. And Rachel and Leah answered and said, ¹¹Whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do. Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels and carried away all his substance, for to go to Isaac his father unto the land of Canaan.

It was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. And he pursued after him and overtook him in the mountain of Gilead. ¹²But God said unto Laban in a dream, Take heed to

thyself that thou speak not to Jacob from good to bad. And Laban came up with Jacob and said, Wherefore didst thou flee secretly, and hast not suffered me to kiss my daughters? It is in my power to do you hurt; but the God of your father spake unto me, saying, Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob from good to bad. ¹³And Jacob and Laban made a covenant with each other. And in the morning Laban rose up and kissed his sons and daughters, and blessed them, and departed, and returned unto his place. ¹⁴And Jacob went his way, and the angels of God met him. When he saw them he said, This is God's host: and called the name of that place Mahanaim.

- ¹ What did Laban say to Jacob about his service?
- ² What was Jacob's reply?
- ³ What did Laban do when the seven years had passed?
- ⁴ What did Jacob say to Laban?
- ⁵ How did Laban try to excuse himself?
- ⁶ Repeat the names of the twelve sons of Jacob.
- ⁷ How were Jacob's wages fixed later?
- ⁸ What is mentioned of Jacob especially?
- ⁹ What did the Lord now say unto him?
- ¹⁰ Of what did Jacob complain to Rachel and Leah?
- ¹¹ What was their reply?
- ¹² What did God say unto Laban, when he pursued Jacob?
- ¹³ How did they separate from each other?
- ¹⁴ Who met Jacob on the way?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Punishment comes according to one's sin. Jacob cheated his brother out of the paternal blessing; Laban beguiled Jacob when he had served for Rachel.
2. Treating servants enviously and selfishly will bring no blessing, and is a great sin. Laban sought continually to pinch off a part of Jacobs' wages.
3. Faithful services rendered also to querulous people will receive a greater reward. Jacob was blessed bountifully for his hard service in Laban's house.

Give me a sober mind,
 A quick discerning eye
 The first approach of sin to find
 And all occasions fly.
 Still may I cleave to Thee,
 And nevermore depart,
 But watch with godly jealousy,
 Over my evil heart.

15. JACOB'S WRESTLING.

Genesis 32, 33, 35.

Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, to say unto him, ¹Let me find grace in thy sight. And the messengers returned, saying, ²We came to thy brother Esau, and he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. ³Then Jacob was greatly afraid and said, O Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto me; deliver me, I pray Thee, from the hand of my brother. ⁴And Jacob chose presents from his flocks and sent them before him to Esau. And he rose up that night, and passed over the ford of Jabbok, and sent over the stream that he had, and remained alone. ⁵And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained, as he wrestled with him. ⁶And the man said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. ⁷But Jacob said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. The man said, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. ⁸And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel. For thou hast striven with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the place Peniel, that is the face of God; for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And the sun rose upon him as he passed over Peniel, and he halted upon his thigh.

⁹Jacob lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Esau come with four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and he himself passed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. And Esau said, Who are these? And he said, The children which God hath given thy servant. And Leah and Rachel, and the children, bowed themselves.

¹⁰And Esau said, Let us take our journey, and I will go before thee. And he said, ¹¹Let my lord pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, for I have tender children, and cattle which give suck. Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. Jacob answered, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. ¹²So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir; but Jacob came to

Salem. And Jacob came unto Isaac his father to Mamre.
¹⁵ And was an hundred and four score years old and gave up the ghost and died, old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

¹ What message did Jacob send to his brother Esau?

² What report did the messengers bring to Jacob?

³ How did Jacob pray in his anxiety?

⁴ How did Jacob try to win his brother?

⁵ Who met Jacob at the ford of Jabbok?

⁶ What did the man say to him?

⁷ What was Jacob's reply?

⁸ What new name did Jacob receive on account of this?

⁹ How was the meeting of the two brothers?

¹⁰ What did Esau offer to do?

¹¹ What did Jacob say?

¹² Where did they now go?

¹³ How old was Isaac when he died?

APPLICATIONS.

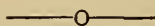
1. Jacob's wrestling was a wrestling of repentance. He became a new man, and, as such, he received a new name. Formerly his name was Jacob, supplanter; now it is Israel, soldier of God.

2. The remembrance of sins committed makes afraid and faint hearted yet a long while thereafter. Jacob feared greatly when he was about to meet his offended brother.

3. A soft answer turneth away wrath. Jacob humiliated himself and acted friendly towards Esau and thereby subdued him.

4. A reconcilable, peaceable heart is evidence of an upright and god fearing man. Forgive, and you will be forgiven (Matt. 6: 14, 15).

While Thou, O my God, art my Help and Defender,
 No cares can o'erwhelm me, no terrors appall;
 The wiles and the snares of this world will but render
 More lively my hope in my God and my all.
 Yes, Thou art my Refuge in sorrow and danger;
 My Strength, when I suffer; my Hope when I fall;
 My comfort and joy in this land of the stranger;
 My Treasure, my glory, my God and my all.



16. JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

Genesis 37.

¹ Joseph, Jacob's son, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and brought the evil report of them unto their father. Now Jacob loved Joseph more than all

his children, because he was the son of his old age : ²and he made him a coat of many colors. ³And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. ⁴Furthermore, Joseph once had a dream, and said unto his brethren, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed. It seemed to me we were binding sheaves in the field ; my sheaf arose, and also stood upright, and your sheaves made obeisance to my sheaf. ⁵And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou become our king and have dominion over us ? And they hated him yet the more. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream. It seemed to me the sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me. ⁶And when this was told to his father, his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What manner of dream is this ? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren come to bow down to thee ? And his brethren envied him. But his father kept the saying in mind.

Joseph's brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Jacob said unto Joseph, ⁷Go, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flock ; and bring me word again. And a certain man found him wandering in the field : and the man asked him, What seekest thou ? He answered, I seek my brethren : tell me, I pray thee, where they are feeding the flock. And the man said, They are departed hence ; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. ⁸When they saw him afar off, they said one to another, Behold this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into a pit and say, An evil beast hath devoured him : and we shall see what will become of his dreams. ⁹When Reuben heard, he desired to deliver him out of their hand, and said, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness. He desired to deliver him out of their hand, to restore him to his father. ¹⁰When now Joseph was come unto his brethren they stripped him of his coat of many colors, and cast him into the pit ; but there was no water in it.

And they sat down to eat. ¹¹And they lifted up their eyes and beheld a company of Ishmaelites coming with their camels bearing spicery and balm down to Egypt. ¹²And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother ? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our

hand be upon him; for he is our brother, and they hearkened unto him. They drew Joseph out of the pit, and sold him for twenty pieces of silver. Now when Reuben returned unto the pit and Joseph was not in the pit, he rent his clothes, and returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? ¹³Then they killed a he goat, and dipped the coat in the blood, and sent it to their father and said, This have we found; see whether it be thy son's coat or not. And he knew it, and said, ¹⁴It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces. And mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, I will go down to the grave to my son mourning. ¹⁵Joseph was brought down into Egypt, and Potiphar, Pharaoh's captain of the guard, bought him of the Ishmaelites. ¹⁶And the Lord was with Joseph, for the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. So Potiphar made him overseer over his house. From that time the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field. He therefore left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and because he had him he knew not aught that was with him, save that he ate and drank.

¹ What did the seventeen year old Joseph do?

² How did his father distinguish him?

³ Why did his brethren become his enemies?

⁴ What made them envy him still more?

⁵ What other dream did Joseph relate to his brethren?

⁶ What did his father say when he heard of it?

⁷ Why did Jacob send Joseph to Shechem?

⁸ What did his brethren say when they saw him come?

⁹ What was Reuben's advice?

¹⁰ What did they do with Joseph?

¹¹ Whom did they see when they lifted up their eyes?

¹² What did Judah say to his brethren?

¹³ What false report did they send to their father?

¹⁴ What did Jacob say when he saw his son's coat?

¹⁵ Where did the merchants take Joseph?

¹⁶ How did Joseph fare in Egypt at first?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If one has advantages, has received uncommon gifts, let him be careful, lest he arouse the envy of others.

2. To have done a great wrong is bad enough, but to add hypocrisy and untruth makes the wrong doubly evil.

3. Poor Jacob! Once he had deceived his blind father, and now he himself is deceived most shamefully. Bear in mind, your children will treat you like you treated your parents.

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge —
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee,
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there.

17. JOSEPH IN PRISON.

Genesis 39, 40.

¹Joseph was comely and well favored, and it came to pass, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon him and loved him and tried to lead him astray. ²But he refused and said unto her, How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? ³It came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his work; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, so that he should remain with her. But he left his garment in her hand and fled and ran out of the house. She then called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, Behold, Potiphar hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us. And she laid up his garment by her, until her master came home; and she spake to him the same words. ⁴When his master heard the words of his wife, he became very wroth, and took Joseph and put him into prison; and they forced his feet into fetters: his body was laid in iron (Ps. 105: 18). ⁵But the Lord was with Joseph and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison, that he committed to his hand all the prisoners. And that which Joseph did, the Lord made it to prosper.

⁶And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker offended their lord the king. And Pharaoh was wroth and put them into the prison, where Joseph was bound. And the butler and the baker both dreamed a dream in one night, each man his dream. ⁷When Joseph came in unto them in the morning and saw that they were sad, he asked them and said, Wherefore look ye so sadly? They

answered, We have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it. Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretation belong to God? tell it me, I pray you. Then the butler told his dream: ⁸In my dream, behold, a vine was before me, which had three branches: and it was as though it budded, grew and blossomed and brought forth ripe grapes; and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into the cup and gave it into Pharaoh's hand. ⁹Joseph said unto him, The three branches are three days. Within yet three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thine office: and thou shalt give his cup into his hand, after the former manner. ¹⁰But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house. For indeed I was stolen away secretly out of the land of the Hebrews; and I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

When the baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said, ¹¹I also was in my dream, and had three white baskets on my head: and in the uppermost basket all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head. ¹²Joseph answered and said, Three baskets are three days; within yet three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh. ¹³And this came to pass. Pharaoh restored the butler to his butlership; but he hanged the baker, as Joseph had interpreted. ¹⁴Yet the butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

¹ What had Potiphar's wife attempted to do?

² How did he reject her sinful proposal?

³ What did Potiphar's wife do out of revenge?

⁴ How did Potiphar treat Joseph when he heard the false accusation of his wife?

⁵ How did Joseph fare in prison?

⁶ What royal officers were with him in prison?

⁷ Why were they so sad one morning when Joseph came in unto them?

⁸ What was the butler's dream?

⁹ How Did Joseph interpret it?

¹⁰ What did he ask of the butler?

¹¹ Relate the baker's dream.

¹³ How was it proven that Joseph's interpretation was correct?

¹⁴ How did the butler reward Joseph's service?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The righteous must suffer much; but he is patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity and in all things which may hereafter befall him, he places his firm trust in God in whose omnipotent providence he firmly believes.

2. Shameful woman! Because Joseph wished to do no wrong nor sin against God, she avenges herself terribly upon the innocent one. God's ways, however, lead downward, at first, but upward thereafter. Through the prison to the throne; from the cross to the crown.

3. The world's reward is ingratitude. It was always thus. The ungrateful butler, after his restoration, forgot Joseph; but God did not forget him. Forgotten benefactor, remember this!

Though troubles assail, and dangers affright,
 Though friends should all fail, and foes all unite,
 Yet one thing secures us, whatever betide,
 The promise assures us, "The Lord will provide."

18. JOSEPH'S ELEVATION.

Genesis 41.

¹At the end of two years, Pharaoh dreamed how he stood by the river and saw seven well favored and fatfleshed kine come up out of the river; and they fed in the reed-grass. After these, he saw seven other kine come up out of the river which were ill favored and leanfleshed, and they stood by the other kine on the brink; and the ill favored and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favored and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. And he slept and dreamed a second time and saw seven ears of corn come up upon one stalk rank and good. After these, he saw seven thin and blasted ears spring up. And the seven thin ears swallowed up the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream. ²In the morning his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt, and told them his dreams; but there was none that could interpret them. ³Then spake the chief butler, saying, I do remember my faults this day. When Pharaoh was wroth with his servants and put me and the chief baker into prison, we both dreamed a dream in one night. And there was with us there a young man, an Hebrew, and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams.

And it came to pass as he interpreted; for I am restored to my office and he was hanged. ⁴Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon. And he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto him, ⁵I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that when thou hearest a dream thou canst interpret it. ⁶Joseph answered, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace. And Pharaoh told his dreams.

⁷Joseph answered, The dream of Pharaoh is one: what God is about to do He hath declared unto Pharaoh. Behold, seven years of great plenty will come throughout the land of Egypt, and there shall arise after them seven years of famine. That the dream was doubled twice unto Pharaoh, it is because God will surely and shortly bring it to pass. ⁸Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt and take up the fifth part in Egypt in the seven plenteous years; and let them gather all the food of these good years, and lay up corn in storehouses, for a store against the seven years of famine. ⁹These words pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. And he said, Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the spirit of God is? And said, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou. Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. ¹⁰And he took off his signet ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck, and made him to ride in the second chariot; and they cried out before him, Bow the knee. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt.

And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh. ¹¹In the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls, and Joseph laid up corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number. ¹²When the seven years of plenty came to an end, the seven years of famine began to come: and there was famine in all lands. But in Egypt there was bread, for Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold unto the Egyptians; for the famine was sore in the land. ¹³And all countries came into Egypt to

Joseph to buy corn, because the famine was sore in all the earth.

- ¹ Later on, what dreams did Pharaoh have?
- ² Who could not interpret Pharaoh's dreams?
- ³ What did the butler relate to the king?
- ⁴ What did Pharaoh do then?
- ⁵ What did Pharaoh say to Joseph?
- ⁶ What was his reply?
- ⁷ How did Joseph interpret the king's dreams?
- ⁸ What advice did Joseph then give?
- ⁹ What did the king then say?
- ¹⁰ What presents did he give to Joseph?
- ¹¹ What did Joseph do during the seven years of plenty?
- ¹² What came when the years of plenty were ended?
- ¹³ To whose benefit was the plenty in Egypt?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Let him who suffers wrong, commend his affairs unto the Lord and be patient; He is the very best and also the least expensive advocate (I Pet. 4: 19).

2. Never abuse the power granted you by avenging former injuries. "Vengeance is mine," saith the Lord. Joseph became a great benefactor for those who had wronged him.

3. Behold, how God can avenge! He elevates the foreign shepherd's son to the throne of a prince. Observe, also, Joseph's humility in the change of his fortune, and how he does everything with God.

Through all the changing scenes of life,
 In trouble and in joy,
 The praises of my God shall still
 My heart and tongue employ.
 Oh, make but trial of His love,
 Experience will decide
 How blessed are they, and only they,
 Who in His truth confide.

19. THE FAMINE.

Genesis 42.

¹ Now Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, and said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? Get you down thither, and buy corn for us, that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down. ² But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with them; for he said, Lest

peradventure mischief befall him. Thus the sons of Israel came to buy corn. But Joseph was the governor over the land and sold corn to all the people. ³Now when his brethren came they bowed themselves before him. And he saw them and knew them, but made himself strange unto them and spake roughly with them, and said, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. But though he knew them, they knew not him. ⁴And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are come to see the nakedness of the land. ⁵They answered, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies. He said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. And they said, We, thy servants, are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not. Joseph said to them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies. Ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. ⁶Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be bound, that your words be proved, whether there be truth in your words or not. And he put them all together into ward three days.

Joseph said unto them on the third day, This do, and live; for I fear God: if ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses. Bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. ⁷And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. Reuben answered them, saying, ⁸Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against this child; and ye would not hear? therefore, also, behold, his blood is required. But they knew not that Joseph understood them, for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept. ⁹When he returned to them, he took Simeon from among them and bound him before their eyes. ¹⁰Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provisions for the way. And they laded their asses with their corn, and departed thence. And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender

in the lodging place, he espied his money, which was in the mouth of his sack. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack. ¹¹Then their heart failed them, and they turned trembling one to another saying, What is this that God hath done unto us?

When they came home unto Jacob their father, they told him all that had befallen them. And when they emptied their sacks, every man's bundle of money was in his sack. And they and their father were afraid. ¹²And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me. ¹³And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. And Jacob said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he only is left. If mischief befall him by the way, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

¹ What did Jacob say unto his sons?

² Why was Benjamin not permitted to go along?

³ What did Joseph's brethren do when they came to him?

⁴ What did Joseph remember?

⁵ What did his brethren say when he accused them of being spies?

⁶ How did Joseph try his brethren?

⁷ What did they say one to another?

⁸ What did Reuben say?

⁹ Which one of them did Joseph keep back as a hostage?

¹⁰ What did Joseph command to be put into their corn sacks?

¹¹ What happened, when they found their money in their sacks?

¹² What did their father say when they returned without Simeon?

¹³ What did Reuben promise in behalf of Benjamin?

¹⁴ What was his father's reply?

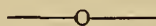
APPLICATIONS.

1. With God nothing is impossible. Joseph's brethren now do voluntarily and unwittingly, what they had scorned as impossible; they fall upon their knees before him.

2. Our conscience is indeed something remarkable; after a long, long time it will awake and say unto the wrong-doer, when trouble befalls him, You have brought this upon you there and there!

3. Never censure God's wise providence. His ways often seem to turn aside, and yet they are straight. Jacob complains, All these things are against me, and discerns not, that God intends to return to him his deeply lamented Joseph and to save his whole household.

O gracious God, in whom I live,
 My feeble efforts aid;
 Help me to watch, and pray, and strive,
 Though trembling and afraid.
 O keep me in Thy heavenly way,
 And bid the tempter flee!
 And let me never, never stray,
 From happiness and Thee.



20. JOSEPH'S BRETHREN GO AGAIN TO EGYPT.

Genesis 43.

¹The famine was sore in the land; and when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again to buy us a little food. Then Judah spake unto him, ²The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. Jacob said, ³Wherefore did you tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? ⁴And they said, The man asked straitly, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? Could we in any wise know that he would say, Bring your brother down? Then Judah said unto his father, ⁵Send the lad with me, and we will rise and go, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; if I bring him not unto thee, then let me bear the blame for ever: for except we had lingered, surely we had now returned a second time. Then Israel said, ⁶If it must be so now, do this; take of the choice fruits of the land, and carry down the man a present, balm and honey, nuts and almonds; and take double money with you, and the money that was returned in your sacks, carry again with you; peradventure it was an oversight. And God Almighty give you mercy before the man. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

They now rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. ⁷When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, Bring the men into the house, and stay and make ready; for the men shall eat with me at noon. And the man brought them into Joseph's house. And they were afraid. But the steward said, Fear not. Then he brought Simeon out unto them, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and gave their asses provender. And they

made ready the present. When Joseph came home, they brought him the present and bowed down to him. ⁸And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well? Is he yet alive? They said, ⁹Our father is well, he is yet alive. And they bowed the head, and made obeisance. And he saw Benjamin his brother, and said, ¹⁰Is this your youngest brother? God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste; for his heart yearned for his brother: and he entered into his chamber; and wept there. ¹¹And when he had washed his face, he came out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread. And they were seated before him according to their age. And they marveled one with another. ¹²And he sent messes unto them; but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of their's.

¹ Why did Jacob command his sons to go to Egypt again?

² What did Judah say to this?

³ What was Jacob's reply?

⁴ What did his sons then say?

⁵ What did Judah say to his father?

⁶ What was his father's reply?

⁷ How did Joseph receive them?

⁸ About whom did he make inquiries?

⁹ What was their answer?

¹⁰ What did Joseph say to Benjamin when he saw him?

¹¹ In what order were they placed when they dined?

¹² How was Benjamin distinguished?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The greater the transgression, the severer the rod. Joseph assumes harshness against his brethren, in order to learn whether they were better-minded toward one another, than they had been toward him.

2. When self-will and self-love go against God's will, He sends His beadle, bitter distress, to break the self-will. The increasing famine compels Jacob to let Benjamin go along.

While life's dark maze I tread,
 And griefs around me spread,
 Be thou my guide;
 Bid darkness turn to day,
 Wipe sorrow's tears away,
 Nor let me ever stray
 From Thee aside!

21. JOSEPH MAKETH HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BRETHREN.

Genesis 44, 45.

¹Joseph commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack, ²and put my silver cup in the sack of the youngest, and his corn money. He did so, and as soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. ³When they were gone out of the city, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? When he overtook them, he spake unto them these words. ⁴And they said unto him, Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again: how then should we steal silver or gold? With whomsoever the cup be found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen. And he said, He with whom it is found shall be my bondman. Then they took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened it. And he searched, and began at the eldest and left at the youngest: ⁵and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and returned to the city.

And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he was yet there: and they fell before him to the ground. ⁶Joseph said unto them, What deed is this ye have done? ⁷Judah said, What shall we say? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's bondmen. And Joseph said, ⁸God forbid that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my bondman; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father. Then Judah said, ⁹O my lord, if I come to my father, and the lad be not with us, we shall bring down the gray hairs of our father with sorrow to the grave. For I became surety for the lad unto my father. Now therefore let me thy servant abide, a bondman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren.

¹⁰Then Joseph could not refrain himself, and he wept aloud, and said, I am Joseph. Doth my father yet live? ¹¹And his brethren could not answer him, for they were so terrified. Then he said, ¹²Come near to me, I pray you; I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Think not that I am angry that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to save

your lives. There are yet five years, in the which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God. ¹³Haste ye, and go up to my father, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not, and I will nourish thee; for there are yet five years of famine. Ye shall haste and bring down my father hither. ¹⁴And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. And Joseph kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them. After that his brethren talked with him.

- ¹ What command did Joseph give his steward?
- ² What did he have put in Benjamin's sack?
- ³ What did Joseph say to his steward later?
- ⁴ How did Joseph's brethren reply to this accusation?
- ⁵ In whose sack was the cup found?
- ⁶ What did Joseph say to his brethren in regard to the cup?
- ⁷ What was Judah's reply?
- ⁸ What did Joseph then say?
- ⁹ What was Judah's answer?
- ¹⁰ What did Joseph then do and say?
- ¹¹ How did this affect his brethren?
- ¹² What further remarks did Joseph make?
- ¹³ What news were they to bring quickly unto their father?
- ¹⁴ How did he show his love for his brethren?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Upon earth, joy and sorrow change about. How great will be the joy, when we meet those in a better world, whom we had mourned as lost.

2. By his wise procedure Joseph had fully reached his object; he learned that his brethren would not let Benjamin become a bondman, as they had him.

3. Children who faithfully nourish and cherish their parents, and do not treat them with contempt when they themselves have attained to high positions and honors, will be rewarded by God. (Eph. 6: 2, 3.)

May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfill,
 To do on earth our Father's will,
 As angels do above:
 To walk in Christ the living way,
 With all Thy children, and obey
 The law of Christian love.

22. JACOB GOETH INTO EGYPT.

Genesis 46-50.

¹Joseph gave his brethren wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and provision for the way, and to each man change of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent ten asses and she asses laden with corn and bread and victual; and he said unto them, ²See that ye fall not out by the way. And they came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, and told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt. ³And his heart fainted, for he believed them not. Then they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them; and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent, the spirit of Jacob revived: and he said, ⁴It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive. I will go and see him. Israel took his journey with all that he had. And when he came to Beersheba, he offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. ⁵And God spake unto him in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And God said, I am the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation.

And Jacob sent Judah before him unto Joseph. Then Joseph made ready his chariot, and went to meet his father. ⁶And when he saw, he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, ⁷Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, that thou art yet alive. Joseph said, I will go up and tell Pharaoh. Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh. ⁸And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: the land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make them to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ⁹And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of my fathers. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence. ¹⁰And Joseph placed his father and his brethren in the best land

of Egypt. ¹¹And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

- ¹ How did Joseph dismiss his brethren?
- ² What admonition did he give them on their way?
- ³ How did Jacob first receive the news from Joseph?
- ⁴ What were his words, when he saw the wagons?
- ⁵ What did God say unto him when he offered a sacrifice?
- ⁶ How did Joseph receive his father?
- ⁷ What did he say to Joseph?
- ⁸ What did Pharaoh say, when Joseph announced the arrival of his father?
- ⁹ What question did Pharaoh ask Jacob, and what was his reply?
- ¹⁰ What else did Joseph do for his father and brethren?
- ¹¹ How long did Jacob live in Egypt, in Goshen.

APPLICATIONS.

1. Great tribulation is often followed by great joy. Jacob is now ready to die, since he had seen the face of Joseph once more and knows that he is yet alive. Love is as strong as death.

2. Never be ashamed of your descent, and never deny your parents before anyone. Though a prince of Egypt, Joseph does not hesitate a moment to present his father to the king and to acknowledge his family openly, which, in Egypt, was considered mean, because they were shepherds. (Gen. 46: 34.)

He leadeth me! Oh, blessed thought!
 O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
 Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
 Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

23. JACOB'S FAREWELL BLESSING.

Genesis 47-50.

When the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, ¹Swear unto me, and deal kindly with me; bury me not in Egypt, but in my father's burying-place. And Joseph said, I will do so; and he sware unto him. After these things one said to Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick. And he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. And one told Jacob, and said; Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself and sat up in bed. And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are

these? Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me. And Israel stretched out his hands, and said, ²God bless the lads and let them grow into a multitude upon the earth. And Israel said unto Joseph, ³Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, ⁴Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the latter days. And he gave every one his blessing; but above all he blessed Judah as God had ordered:  ⁵*Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.* And when Jacob had made an end, he yielded up the ghost. ⁶Then Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. ⁷And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. And the Egyptians wept for him three score and ten days. ⁸Thereafter they went into the land of Canaan, and buried Jacob in the cave of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham had bought for a buryingplace.

⁹But Joseph's brethren were afraid, when their father was dead, and said, It may be that Joseph will hate us, will fully requite us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a message unto him, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the transgression of thy brethren and their sin; and now, we pray thee, forgive us our transgression. ¹⁰And Joseph wept when they spake thus unto him, and said, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? Ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them. And Joseph said, ¹¹I die: but God will bring you up out of this land unto the land which He sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. When God will visit you, ye shall carry up my bones from hence. And Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old.

¹ What promise did Joseph have to give his father?

² What did Jacob say when he blessed Joseph's sons?

³ What did he say to Joseph?

⁴ Why did Jacob call his sons to his death-bed?

⁵ What blessing did God direct him to give to Judah?

⁶ What did Joseph do when Jacob had passed away?

- ⁷ What command did he give his physicians?
- ⁸ Where was Jacob buried?
- ⁹ What message did Joseph's brethren send to him when Jacob had died?
- ¹⁰ How did Joseph quiet them?
- ¹¹ What did he ask of his brethren?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Good and pious parents like to speak with their children of God's word and God's grace even on their death-bed, and leave them a blessing.

2. Good and pious children try earnestly to fulfill the last wishes of their parents, sparing neither trouble nor expense.

3. That Jacob and Joseph wished to be buried in the land of Canaan by the side of Abraham, Isaac, Sarah, and Rebecca, was a beautiful proof of their stedfast faith in the promises of God. (Gen. 28: 13.)

Let sorrow's rudest tempest blow,
 Each cord on earth to sever;
 Our King says, Come, and there's our home
 For ever, oh, for ever!

24. JOB.

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job. ¹That man feared God, and eschewed evil. ²He had seven sons and three daughters, and his cattle was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses: he had a very great household, and was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons held a feast, every one on his day, and called for their sisters to eat and drink with them. And when the days were gone about, Job rose up early, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all. ³For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned. Now it came to pass, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, that Satan came also among them. The Lord said unto him, Whence comest thou? Then Satan said, From going to and fro in the earth. And the Lord said, ⁴Hast thou considered my servant Job? for there is none like him in the earth. Then Satan answered, ⁵Doth Job fear God for nought? For Thou hast blessed him, and his sub-

stance is increased. And the Lord said, ⁶Behold, all that he hath is in thy hand, only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

⁷It fell on a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine, that there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: when the Sabeans (of Arabia) fell upon them and took them away; they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and burned up the sheep, and the servants; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans have taken away the camels and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking: and behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead. ⁸Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshiped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job? for there is none like him in the earth, and he still holdeth fast his integrity. And Satan said, All that a man hath will he give for his life. But touch his bone and his flesh, and he will renounce Thee to Thy face. ⁹And the Lord said, Behold, he is in thine hand: only spare his life. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took a potsherd to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes. ¹⁰Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity? renounce God, and die. ¹¹But he said, Shall we receive good, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did Job not sin.

¹²And Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, came to comfort him. And they knew him not, and wept, and sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven

nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great. After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born. Then Eliphaz said, Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty. ¹³Then Job answered and said, The arrows of the Almighty are within me. Ye overwhelm the fatherless. My cause is righteous. Then answered Bildad and said, Doth God pervert judgment? ¹⁴Then Job answered and said, Of a truth I know that it is so: but how can man be just with God? If he be pleased to contend with Him, he cannot answer Him one of a thousand. Then answered Zophar and said, If thou set thine heart aright, and put iniquity far away, surely then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot, and not fear. Then Job answered and said, ¹⁵How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words? Know now that God hath subverted me. I know that my Redeemer liveth. Now Elihu had waited to speak unto Job, because they were elder than he, and he said, ¹⁶I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me. Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.

Then the Lord answered out of the whirlwind, and said, ¹⁷Who is that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? ¹⁸Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that Thou canst do all things and that no thought can be withholden from Thee. Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. ¹⁹And the Lord said to Eliphaz, My wrath is kindled against thee and thy two friends: for ye have not spoken the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. ²⁰So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: and he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And after this Job lived an hundred

and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, and died, being old and full of days.

- ¹ What high praise is given to Job in this story?
- ² What is said of his household and wealth?
- ³ Why did he offer burnt-offerings for everyone of his children?
- ⁴ What did the Lord say to Satan, the adversary?
- ⁵ What was his reply to the Lord?
- ⁶ To what extent did God put Job into Satan's power?
- ⁷ How did Job lose all his children and flocks?
- ⁸ What did Job say when he had lost all?
- ⁹ How did God try Job further?
- ¹⁰ What did Job's wife say to him?
- ¹¹ What was Job's reply?
- ¹² Who came to Job, intending to comfort him?
- ¹³ How did Job complain?
- ¹⁴ What did he reply to Bildad's accusation?
- ¹⁵ How did he answer Zophar's charge?
- ¹⁶ How did Elihu accuse him?
- ¹⁷ What did God then say to Job?
- ¹⁸ What was his reply?
- ¹⁹ Give the words that God spoke to Job's friends.
- ²⁰ What followed Job's great trials?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Satan, the adversary of the children of God, knew nothing of which to accuse Job, except that he was serving God for the sake of temporal advantages. There is certainly such a danger (compare John 6: 26); but God knew better, and so permitted a trial.

2. Outward troubles and tribulations are no reliable evidence, that a man is godless, and his sufferings are a well merited punishment from God. Therefore beware of unkind judging.

3. If you trust in God you need not fear want. True faith says, My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. (Ps. 76:26.)

4. Though Job was a pious man, he was not without blame in the presence of altogether holy God. While defending his innocence against his miserable comforters, yet he is constrained in the end to repent in the dust and ashes.

5. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation (James 1: 12). After having passed well through his trials (for he held fast to his piety), Job was blessed more than before, that he had seven sons and three daughters, and numerous flocks, and lived yet one hundred and forty years.

Should earth against my soul engage,
And hellish darts be hurled,
Then I can smile at Satan's rage,

And face a frowning world.
Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall,
May I but safely reach by home,
My God, my heav'n, my all.

25. THE BIRTH OF MOSES AND HIS FLIGHT.

Exodus 1, 2.

When Joseph had died, and all his brethren, the children of Israel increased abundantly. ¹Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph, and said, Behold, the children of Israel are more than we: come let us deal wisely with them; lest it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they also join themselves unto our enemies. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with hard service, in mortar, and in brick. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied. ²And Pharaoh charged his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi named Jochebed. ³And the woman bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. When she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and she put the child therein; and laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. ⁴And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river side. When she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And she opened it and saw the child: and behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. ⁵Then said his sister who had watched the child near by, Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And she said to her, Go. And she called her mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said, ⁶Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. ⁷And the child grew and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son, and called his name Moses: and said, because I drew him out of the water.

⁸And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and works (Acts 7:22). But by faith he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to be evil entreated with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. (Heb. 11:25). ¹⁰When Moses was forty years old, it came to his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And he looked upon their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian smiting one of his brethren. And he smote the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. He supposed his brethren would have understood how that God, by his hand was giving them deliverance: but they understood not. (Acts 7:25.) ¹¹And he went out the second day, and, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a judge over us? thinkest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, surely the thing is known! When Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, ¹²and dwelt in the land of Midian—and sat down by a well.

¹³Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away. But Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How is it that ye came so soon today? And they said, An Egyptian drew water for us, and watered the flock. And he said unto his daughters, Where is he? why is it that ye have left the man? call him that he may eat with us. And Moses was content to dwell with the man; and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter. ¹⁴And the Lord gave Moses two sons, and he named them Gershom and Eliezer.

¹ How did the children of Israel fare after the death of Joseph?

² What was Pharaoh's command when they continued to multiply?

³ How did Jochebed try to save her little son?

⁴ How was the child saved from the river?

⁵ What did the child's sister say to the daughter of Pharaoh?

⁶ What did Pharaoh's daughter say to the mother of the child?

⁷ What name did she give to the child, and why?

⁸ How was Moses brought up, as the son of Pharaoh?

⁹ What was Moses' choice when he reached manhood?

¹⁰ What did Moses do when he visited his brethren?

¹¹ Why did he flee from Egypt?

¹² Where did he go?

¹³ How did he become acquainted with Reuel?

¹⁴ How many sons did the Lord give him?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If God wishes to do something great, He often begins in a very small way, and lays His plans deep. A poor child consigned to death was appointed to become the saviour of His oppressed people.

2. Never think, that nobody will see you, if you undertake to do wrong. How bitter was Moses' disappointment!

3. It is deplorable, that when God wishes to help and save men by the hand of any one, they will not perceive it.

Who points the clouds their course,
 Whom winds and seas obey;
 He shall direct thy wandering feet,
 He shall prepare thy way.
 Thou on the Lord rely,
 So safe thou shalt go on;
 Fix on His word thy steadfast eye,
 So shall thy work be done.

26. THE CALL OF MOSES.

Exodus 3, 4.

¹Moses was keeping the flock of the priest of Midian, and came to the mountain of God. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. And he saw that the bush burned with fire, and was not consumed. When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And He said, ²draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. ³And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, ⁴I have seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people out of Egypt. Moses said, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh? And He said, I will be with thee. ⁵Thus shalt thou say

unto the people, I AM (Jehovah) hath sent me unto you. And this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

⁶But Moses said, Behold, they will not believe me. ⁷And the Lord said, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. He did so, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. But the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand; and take it by the tail. Moses did so, and it became a rod in his hand: that they may believe, that the Lord hath appeared unto thee. And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. Moses did so, and when he took it out, behold his hand was leprous as white as snow. And He said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. And the Lord said, If they will not believe these two signs, thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land, and it shall become blood. ⁸And Moses said, O Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since; for I am of a slow tongue (speech).

And the Lord said, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh a man dumb, or deaf, is it not I, the Lord? ⁹Now therefore go; I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak. And Moses said, ¹⁰O Lord, send whom Thou wilt send. ¹¹And the anger of the Lord was kindled, and He said, Is there not Aaron thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people.

Moses returned to Jethro his father-in-law and took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and returned to Egypt, and took the rod of God in his hand. And the Lord said to Aaron, ¹²Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mountain of God, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron everything, and they went and gathered together the elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and Moses did the signs in the sight of the people. ¹³And the people believed, and bowed their heads and worshiped, because the Lord had seen their affliction.

¹ Where and how did the Angel of the Lord appear unto Moses?

² What did the Lord say unto him, out of the burning bush?

- ³ What did Moses do?
- ⁴ What else did God say unto him?
- ⁵ What was Moses to say unto his people?
- ⁶ How did Moses try to excuse himself?
- ⁷ With what signs was Moses to prove his mission?
- ⁸ What further excuse did Moses make?
- ⁹ What more did the Lord promise him?
- ¹⁰ What was Moses' reply?
- ¹¹ Who was to be Moses' spokesman?
- ¹² What command did the Lord give unto Aaron?
- ¹³ How did the people receive Aaron's message?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The Lord Himself prepares His workers, and does so mostly in seclusion. Moses had to be at first a shepherd in Midian for forty years, and learn all the ways and by-ways there, before he led the children of Israel through the wilderness.

2. Excuses will not be accepted where God and duty command, and especially so, if the excuses rest upon a false basis. When Moses was to appear before Pharaoh, it was not so much his slowness of tongue that troubled him, as the Egyptian he had slain. (Ex. 2: 11, 12.)

3. Whenever the Lord calls anyone to an office He also gives him the necessary talents. "I will be with thy mouth, and will teach thee what thou shalt do."

Thy way, not mine, O Lord,
 However dark it be!
 Lead me by thine own hand;
 Choose out the path for me.
 I dare not choose my lot:
 I would not, if I might;
 Choose Thou for me, my God,
 So shall I walk aright.

27. MOSES GOES TO PHARAOH.

Exodus 5-11.

¹Afterward Moses and Aaron came in, and said unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the God of Israel, Let my people go. ²And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should hearken unto His voice? Get you unto your burdens. ³And Pharaoh said, Let heavier work be laid upon the men, that they may labor therein; and let them not regard lying words. Then the

taskmasters said unto the people, Pharaoh will not give you straw. Go yourselves, get you straw: yet nought of your work shall be diminished. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble. ⁴And the taskmasters were urgent, saying, Fulfill your daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the officers of the children of Israel were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick?

But Moses besought the Lord. ⁵And the Lord said, Say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord; I will redeem you, and ye shall know, that I am the Lord. And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel; but they hearkened not for anguish of spirit and cruel bondage. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh. ⁶And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and his servants, and it became a serpent. ⁷Then Pharaoh called for the wise men and the sorcerers, Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. 3: 8), and they also did in like manner; every man cast down his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. And Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them.

And the Lord said, Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning; lo, he goeth out unto the water, and they did so. ⁸¹) And Aaron lifted up the rod, and smote the water, and the waters were turned to blood. And the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink. And the magicians did in like manner; and the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them. ²) And the Lord let frogs go up and come into Pharaoh's house, into his bedchamber, and upon his bed, and the magicians did in like manner. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Intreat the Lord for me, that He take away the frogs from us, and I will let the people go. And Moses cried unto the Lord, and the frogs died. But when Pharaoh saw that there was **respite**, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them. ³) And the Lord let lice come upon man and upon beast. And the magicians could not do in like manner, and said, This is the finger of God! But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them. ⁴) And the Lord sent swarms of flies upon Pharaoh and upon his servants, and upon his people, and into his house; all the houses were full, but in the land of Goshen there were no swarms of flies.

And Pharaoh said I will let you go; only, **intreat for me.** And Moses intreated the Lord, and the swarms of flies departed. But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let them go. ⁵) And the Lord sent a murrain upon all the cattle; but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one. ⁶) And the Lord let boils with blains break forth upon man, and upon beast; and the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them. ⁷) And the Lord rained hail upon all the land; and the hail smote all that was in the field, both man and beast, and every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen was there no hail. And Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, I have sinned; intreat the Lord that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail, and I will let you go. And Moses intreated, and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth. But Pharaoh sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.

⁸) And the Lord brought locusts with an east wind, and they did eat everything. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, I have sinned; intreat the Lord that He may take away from me this death only. And Moses intreated, and a west wind took up the locusts and cast them into the Red Sea, and there remained not one. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart. ⁹) And the Lord let darkness come for three days, that they saw not one another, nor arose from their place; but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. And Pharaoh called unto Moses and said, Go ye, and your little ones; only let your herds be stayed. And Moses said, Our cattle also shall go with us, that we may have sacrifices and burnt offerings. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he said, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in the day thou seest my face thou shalt die. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more. ¹⁰) And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet one plague more will I bring, afterwards he will let you go hence; ⁹¹⁰ about midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the firstborn shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh even unto the firstborn of the maidservant; and all the firstborn of cattle. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, that ye may know how that

the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

- ¹ What did Moses and Aaron say unto Pharaoh?
- ² What was his reply?
- ³ What did Pharaoh say unto his taskmasters?
- ⁴ How did they treat the children of Israel?
- ⁵ What did the Lord say unto Moses when he besought Him?
- ⁶ What sign was done by Aaron in the presence of Pharaoh?
- ⁷ What did Pharaoh do then?
- ⁸ How many plagues did God send upon Egypt?
- ⁹ What were the plagues?
- ¹⁰ What was the last and by far the hardest plague?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Sorcerers and soothsayers are awkward imitators of God; but whenever anything is created free and springs into being they must confess, This is the finger of God.

2. He who is often warned and yet continues to sin and remains in his impenitency, brings upon himself the judgment of obduracy.

3. If the office and station in which God has placed you, tend to become difficult, then do as Moses did, beseech the Lord for help.

Through all the changing scenes of life, in trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still my heart and tongue employ.
Fear Him, ye saints, and you will then have nothing else to fear;
Make you His service your delight, your wants shall be His care.

28. THE EXODUS OUT OF EGYPT.

Exodus 12-15.

The Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, 'In the tenth day of the month of Abib every man shall take a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year; and they shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month, and shall kill it at even. ²And they shall take the blood and put it on the two sideposts and on the lintel of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread, and ye shall let nothing of it remain until morning. Ye shall have your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand, as those in haste, for it is the Lord's passover. For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night and will smite all the firstborn, both

man and beast. ³And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are, that when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And ye shall keep this day a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. And when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, and your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? ye shall say, 'It is the Lord's passover, who passed over the children of Israel, when He smote the firstborn of the Egyptians.

⁵And at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn, from the firstborn of Pharaoh unto the firstborn of the captive, and all the firstborn of cattle. And there was a great cry, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. ⁶And Pharaoh said, Rise up, get you forth from among my people; go serve the Lord. Take both your flocks and your herds, and be gone; and bless me also. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people to send them out of the land in haste; for they said, ⁷'We be all dead men. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. And they did according to the word of Moses, and asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and of gold, and raiment: and the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they left them have what they asked.

⁸Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children and a mixed multitude, and flocks, and herds. And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which, by strength of hand the Lord hath brought you out of this place. ⁹And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and by night. ¹⁰And when it was told the king of Egypt that the people were fled, he said, What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving? And he made ready his six hundred chariots, and pursued after them, and overtook them encamping by the sea. And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them. And they were sore afraid. ¹¹Moses said unto the people, fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will work for you today. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall

hold your peace. And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward. But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it, and the children of Israel shall go in. And, behold, the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord. And the angel of God which went before the camp of Israel removed and went behind them, and came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, so that the one came not near the other all the night. ¹²Now when Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided; and the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them.

In the morning watch the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of cloud, and discomfited their host, and took off their chariot wheels and made them to drive heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee, for the Lord fighteth for Israel. ¹³And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea; and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it. Thus the Lord overthrew them in the midst of the sea, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, even all the host of Pharaoh; there remained not so much as one of them. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and they saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And the people feared the Lord, and they believed in Him, and in His servant Moses.

¹⁴Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song:

I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously:
The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.
The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation.

¹ What command did the Lord give Moses and Aaron?

² What was to be done with the blood of the lamb?

³ Of what was this to be a token?

⁴ How were they to begin the celebration of this day?

⁵ What happened at midnight?

⁶ What did Pharaoh say in regard to this great calamity?

⁷ Why did the Egyptians urge the people to go?

⁸ How many people went out, and where did they go first?

⁹ What did Moses take along?

¹⁰ What did Pharaoh do when the people had fled?

¹¹ How did Moses encourage the frightened people?

¹² What miracle was performed at the Red Sea?

¹³ What happened to Pharaoh's host?

¹⁴ What did Moses and the children of Israel do then?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The liberation of the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage was a mighty deed of wonder wrought by God, and at the same time it was typical of our redemption from the bondage of sin. Moses himself was a prominent type of Christ.

2. The Lord hath made His wonderful works to be remembered (Ps. 111: 4). The Jewish Easter-festival recalls to mind the sparing of the firstborn of Israel; the Christian Easter-festival reminds us of Christ's resurrection.

3. Severe divine judgments may indeed break the power of the wicked, but are unable to renew their hearts (Prov. 27: 22).

4. He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. (Prov. 29: 1.)

The hosts of God encamp around
The dwellings of the just;
Deliv'rance He affords to all
Who on His succor trust.

29. ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS.

Exodus 15-17.

The children of Israel went three days in the wilderness and found no water. ¹And when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? ²And he cried unto the Lord; and He shewed him a tree, and he cast it into the waters, and the waters were made sweet. ³And they came to Elim, where were twelve springs of water and three score and ten palm trees. From Elim, they took their journey unto the wilderness of Sin. ⁴And the children of Israel murmured and said, Would that we died in Egypt; for ye have brought us forth into the wilderness to kill us with hunger. Then said the Lord unto Moses, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel. Say unto them, In the morning ye shall be filled with bread, and shall know that I am the Lord your God.

⁵In the morning the dew lay round about the camp; and when the dew was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness a small round thing, as the hoar frost on the ground, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said *Manhu?* that is, What is it? ⁶Moses said unto them, It is the bread, which the Lord hath given you from heaven to eat. Gather ye of it every man according to his eating. And they did so, and gathered, some more, some less. And when they measured it, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till morning. But some of them left of it, and it bred worms and stank. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread. And Moses said, Bake and seethe, and all that remaineth over keep until the morning. This did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. Then Moses said, ⁷Today is the Sabbath unto the Lord; today ye shall not find it in the field. But some of the people went out on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omerful of manna therein, to be kept for your generations.

And Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, and pitched in Rephidim: and they had no water there. ⁸Wherefore they strove with Moses and said, Give us water. And Moses said, Why strive ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord? But the people murmured. ⁹And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. ¹⁰And the Lord said, Thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take into thine hand; behold, I will stand before thee there upon the Rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it. And Moses did so. ¹¹And he called the place Massah and Meribah (temptation and strife), because of the striving, and because the children of Israel had tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?

Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel. And Moses said unto Joshua, ¹²Choose out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand upon the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. Joshua did so, and fought with Amalek. But Moses, Aaron and Hur went up to the top of

the hill. And when Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed: but when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands. And his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek.

¹ Why did the children of Israel murmur at Marah?

² What did Moses do according to God's command?

³ What did they find at Elim?

⁴ How did the people murmur in the wilderness of Sin?

⁵ What occurred on the next morning?

⁶ What did Moses say unto the people?

⁷ Why were they to gather twice as much on the sixth day?

⁸ Why did the people strive with Moses in Rephidim?

⁹ How did Moses cry unto the Lord?

¹⁰ How did the Lord give the people water?

¹¹ What name was given to the place?

¹² How were the Amalekites defeated?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It requires much patience to deal with grumbling and dissatisfied people. Moses was a very patient man.

2. It is one of the bad traits of man, to forget God's benevolence so readily, and to lapse into grumbling and ingratitude.

3. The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (Jas. 5: 16.) Israel gained a great victory through the united prayer of the three godly men.

— — — — —

Often to Marah's brink
Have I been brought;
Shrinking the cup to drink,
Help I have sought;
And with the prayer's ascent
Jesus the branch hath rent—
Quickly relief hath sent,
Sweetening the draught.

—o—

30. THE GIVING OF THE LAW ON SINAI.

Exodus 19, 20, 24.

In the third month, after the children of Israel were gone forth out of Egypt, they came into the wilderness of Sinai; and camped there before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying,

¹Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the Lord commanded him. ²And all the people answered together, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses reported the words of the people unto the Lord. And the Lord said, ³Go unto the people and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments, and be ready against the third day. And thou shalt set bounds and say, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount: whosoever toucheth the mount, whether it be beast or man, shall be surely put to death. Then Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified them, and they washed their garments.

⁴When now the third day came, when it was morning, there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceedingly loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. ⁵And mount Sinai was altogether on smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And the voice of the trumpet waxed louder and louder. Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

⁶And God spake all these words saying,

I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in

vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. ⁷And when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off, and said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. ⁸And Moses said unto the people, Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before you, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was. And the Lord said unto Moses, what he was to command the children of Israel. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments. ⁹And all the people answered with one voice, All the words which the Lord hath spoken will we do.

¹ What was Moses to say unto the people?

² What was the reply of the people?

³ How were the people to prepare themselves?

⁴ What happened on the third day?

⁵ How did Mount Sinai appear at that time?

⁶ Repeat the ten words or commandments.

⁷ What did the people do when they beheld this dreadful sight?

⁸ How did Moses try to quiet the people?

⁹ What did the people say, when Moses told them all the words of the Lord?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The law that condemneth was given under terrifying manifestations and a loud voice; the gospel that bringeth salvation celebrates its entry into the world quietly and without external demonstrations.

2. Israel promised unanimously, "All the words which the Lord hath spoken will we do." But the Lord said, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" (Deut. 5: 29.)

— — — — —
 May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfill,
 To do on earth our Father's will,
 As angels do above:
 To walk in Christ, the living Way,
 With all Thy children, and obey
 The law of Christian love.

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31. THE GOLDEN CALF.

Exodus 32.

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mount, they gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said, ¹Up, make us gods, which shall go before us! For as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him. And Aaron said, ²Break off the golden rings from the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, bring them unto me. Then all the people brake off the golden rings from their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them, and made a molten calf. And they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of Egypt! When Aaron saw this, he built an altar and made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. ³Thereafter the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. And the Lord said unto Moses, ⁴Go, get thee down, for thy people have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. I see this is a stiffnecked people: now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, that I may consume them: and I will make thee a great nation. And Moses besought the Lord, and said, ⁵O Lord, turn from Thy

fierce wrath, remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, to whom Thou swarest by Thine own self and saidst unto them: I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven.

Moses went down from the mount with the two tables of the testimony in his hands: tables, that were written on both their sides; and God Himself had made them and graven the writing upon them.— Now when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. Moses answered, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear. ⁶When he came nigh unto the camp and saw the calf, and the dancing, his anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount; and he took the calf and burnt it with fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it, and he said unto Aaron, ⁷What did this people unto thee that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? ⁸Aaron answered, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on evil.

Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Whoso is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord: ⁹Put ye every man his sword upon his thigh, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and his companion, and his neighbor that has turned from the Lord. And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. On the morrow Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make atonement for your sin. ¹⁰When Moses returned unto the Lord, he said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin; forgive them! And if not, blot me out of Thy book! ¹¹And the Lord said, Whosoever hath sinned, him will I blot out of my book. In the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them.

¹ What did the people say unto Aaron, when Moses delayed on the mount?

² What did Aaron command them to do?

³ What did the people do after they had sacrificed before their idol?

- ⁴ What did God say unto Moses?
⁵ How did Moses beseech the Lord?
⁶ What did he see and do when he had come down from the mount?
⁷ What did Moses say unto Aaron?
⁸ What was Aaron's reply?
⁹ What did Moses say unto the sons of Levi?
¹⁰ What did Moses say unto the Lord?
¹¹ What was the Lord's reply?

APPLICATIONS.

1. There is no true piety, where evil is shunned only for man's sake. Because Moses delayed, the people became idolatrous.
2. Leaders and magistrates ought never yield, no matter how vehemently the people may demand a wrong; much less should they assist in wrong-doing.
3. A bad example exercises a great power over God's people. Israel wanted a god like the heathen Egyptians had.
4. It inflicts great pain upon a faithful servant of God, whenever he sees people sin willfully. God, however, will punish those only, who have sinned.

Be Thou, O God, exalted high;
 And as Thy glory fills the sky,
 So let it be on earth displayed,
 Till Thou art here and there obeyed.

32. THE SPIES.

Numbers 10-14.

In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month after the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle of the testimony, and ¹the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud abode in the wilderness of Paran. And the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting place for them. And the cloud of the Lord was over them by day, when they set forward from the camp. And when the ark set forward, Moses said, ²Rise up, O Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the ten thousands of thousands of Israel.

But the children of Israel soon complained in the wilder-

ness. ³And the fire of the Lord burnt among them and devoured in the uttermost part of the camp. And Moses prayed unto the Lord, and the fire abated. The children of Israel also wept again, and said, ⁴Who will give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt for nought: the cucumbers, and the melons, and the onions; but now we see nought save manna. And the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly, and Moses was displeased. And Moses prayed unto the Lord. ⁵And the Lord said, Tomorrow ye shall eat flesh. Is the Lord's hand waxed short? now shalt thou see whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not. ⁶And a wind brought quails from the sea. And the people rose up, and gathered all day and all night. ⁷While the flesh was yet between their teeth, the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. The name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah (the graves of lust), because there they buried the people that lusted.

And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Paran, saying, ⁸Send thou men, that they may spy out the land of Canaan. And twelve men went and spied out the land. ⁹And they came unto the valley of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, for it was the time of the first grapes, and they bare it upon a staff between two. And they returned after forty days and told the people, ¹⁰We came unto the land which floweth with milk and honey; but a strong people dwell in it, and the cities are walled and very great. We be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we; moreover we saw giants there, and we were in their sight as grasshoppers.

¹¹Then all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night, and murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would we had died in this wilderness! And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return to Egypt. ¹²Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua and Caleb, who had also spied out the land, rent their clothes, and said, The land is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land; only rebel not against the Lord. ¹³But all the congregation bade stone them.

Then appeared the glory of the Lord before all the children of Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses, ¹⁴How long will this people despise me? and how long will they not believe in me? As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Because all those men which have seen my glory and my signs in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have tempted me these ten times, and have not hearkened unto my voice, shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, all that were numbered of you, from twenty years and upward, save Caleb and Joshua. But your little ones will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have rejected. But ye and your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and you shall be wanderers (shepherds) in the wilderness forty years, after the number forty of days in which ye spied out the land; and ye shall know my alienation. ¹⁵So all the spies died, save Joshua and Caleb, who, of these men, remained alive.

¹ Where did the Lord lead the children of Israel out of the wilderness of Sin?

² What were Moses' words when the tabernacle moved, and when it rested?

³ What happened when the people complained in the wilderness?

⁴ Why did the people begin again to murmur and to weep?

⁵ What did the Lord say unto Moses when he prayed unto Him?

⁶ How did the Lord provide meat for the people?

⁷ How did the Lord punish the people that had lusted?

⁸ What was the Lord's command to Moses in the wilderness of Paran?

⁹ What did the spies do at the valley—or brook—of Eshcol?

¹⁰ What did the spies report when they returned?

¹¹ How did the whole congregation receive the report?

¹² What did Moses, Aaron and Joshua do then?

¹³ What did the people say?

¹⁴ What judgment did the Lord pronounce over the rebellious people?

¹⁵ What befell the spies?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If you have become a pilgrim to the heavenly Canaan, beware of lusting again for the tares of this world, as did the children of Israel for the flesh-pots of Egypt.

2. Truth and righteousness do not always go with the majority. There may be ten against two. Be not surprised if under such conditions justice prevails with difficulty.

3. Like the children of Israel who fell in the wilderness, many a one in seeking the "better land" has brought great sacrifices, suffered

many privations and strained himself exceedingly, yet at last failed to reach it, because of his unbelief (Heb. 4: 11).

O sweet and blessed country,
The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country,
That eager hearts expect!
Jesus, in mercy bring us
To that dear land of rest;
Who art with God the Father,
And Spirit ever blest.

33. THE REBELLION OF KORAH.

Numbers 16, 17.

Korah, a Levite, with Dathan and Abiram, of the tribe of Reuben, rose up before Moses, with two hundred and fifty princes of the congregation, and said, ¹Ye take too much upon you: wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? When Moses heard it he fell upon his face and said unto Korah and unto all his company, ²Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram. ³But they said, We will not come up. Is it a small thing, that thou killest us in the wilderness? But thou must needs make thyself a prince also? Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.

And the glory of the Lord appeared. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I consume them in a moment. And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation? ⁴And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me. If these men die as every man dieth, then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing and the ground open her mouth, and swallow them up with all that appertain to them, then ye shall understand that these men despised the Lord. ⁵And when he had made an end of speaking these words, the ground clave asunder that was under them, and opened her mouth,

and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods; and the earth closed upon them. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up.

After this time little is known as to how the children of Israel fared in the wilderness. Only the names of the places in which they camped for a longer or shorter time during this period have been recorded by Moses, the man of God (Num. 33). ⁶But the house of Israel rebelled against the Lord, and walked not in His statutes; they made themselves images, and served Moloch. (Deut. 32: 12-17. Ezek. 20: 11-14. Am. 5: 25.) ⁷And Moses, the servant of the Lord, was troubled in his heart, because Israel remembered not God. But he trusted in God, and, probably during this time, sung the following psalm:

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth, and the earth,
From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.
Thou turnest man to destruction;
And sayest, Return, ye children of men.
For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is
past,
And as a watch in the night. (Ps. 90.)

¹ What complaint did the Korahites raise against Moses and Aaron?

² What reply did Moses give them?

³ How did Dathan and Abiram defy Moses?

⁴ What did God command Moses to do?

⁵ What happened when Moses had finished these words?

⁶ What else is said of the people?

⁷ How did Moses conduct himself?

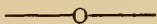
APPLICATIONS.

1. The loose rabble, which would like to have the reigns of government in its own hands, always thinks the true servants of God are too particular, that they are too strict and exaggerate matters, when they insist upon justice and order.

2. God often declares Himself emphatically for the pious, whenever they are despised, reviled, and accused falsely, by rescuing them and punishing their adversaries.

3. After a long, long time it is still said of the children of Israel, "They rebelled against the Lord in the wilderness: they walked not in His statutes." What will posterity say of you?

Give me a sober mind,
A quick discerning eye,
The first approach of sin to find
And all occasions fly.
Still may I cleave to Thee,
And nevermore depart,
But watch with godly jealousy
Over my evil heart.



34. THE SETTING-OUT IN THE DESERT.

Numbers 20, 21.

When the forty years had passed, the children of Israel came into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh. ²And Miriam died there, and was buried there. ³And there was no water for the congregation; and they strove with Moses, saying, Would that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord! Why have ye brought the assembly of the Lord into the wilderness, that we should die there, we and our cattle? And wherefore have ye led us up out of Egypt into this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink. Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces. ⁴And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and assemble the congregation, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, that it give forth its water.

Then Moses took the rod, as the Lord had commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said unto them, ⁵Hear now, ye rebels, shall we bring you forth water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and smote the rock with his rod twice: and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their cattle. And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, ⁶Because ye believed not in me, ye shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.

And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Let us pass through thy land. But Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass through me, and came out against him with much people. ⁷Wherefore Israel turned away from him, and came unto mount Hor. And the Lord said, Aaron shall not enter into

the land, because ye rebelled at the waters of Meribah. ⁸Take Aaron and bring him up into mount Hor, there shall he die. And they went up into mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. And Aaron died there in the top of the mount. When all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they wept for him thirty days.

And they journeyed from Hor by the way to the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom. And the people were much discouraged because of the way, and spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye bought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread nor water here; and our soul loatheth this light bread. ⁹And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people; they bit the people, and much of the people of Israel died. Therefore they came to Moses, and said, We have sinned; pray unto the Lord, that He take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. ¹⁰And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery (brazen) serpent and set it upon a standard; every one that is bitten, when he looked unto it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and set it upon the standard, and it came to pass, that if the serpent had bitten any man, when he looked unto the serpent of brass, he lived.

And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon, king of the Amorites, saying, Let me pass through thy land: we will not turn aside into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the highway, until we have passed thy border. ¹¹And Sihon would not suffer the children of Israel to pass through his border, but went out against Israel. ¹²And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok. And they smote Og, the king of Bashan, and possessed his land.

¹ Where did the children of Israel wander when the forty years had passed?

² What happened at Kadesh?

³ Why did the people strive again with Moses?

⁴ What did God then command Moses to do?

⁵ How did Moses speak to the people when he smote the rock?

⁶ What did the Lord say then to Moses and Aaron?

⁷ Where did Israel go in order to avoid the army of the Edomites?

⁸ Where did Aaron die?

⁹ How were the people punished when they spoke against God, and against Moses?

¹⁰ What was Moses now commanded to do?

¹¹ What position did Sihon the king of the Amorites take against Israel?

¹² How did the king of Bashan fare?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If God has so much patience with disobedient and wilful men, we, too, ought to be patient with the faults and shortcomings of our fellowmen.

2. It often happens, that man thinks in his heart, that God should not show favors to this or that person because of his misdeeds, and thus sets himself up for a judge. This was the sin of Moses and Aaron.

3. If God punishes, He also loves. He, indeed, sent fiery serpents among the people, but also provided an effective remedy. The brazen serpent was a type of the crucified Saviour (John 3:14). The command there was, Look up and recover, but here it is, Believe and live.

Soon, when the desert shall be crossed
 The flood of death passed o'er.
 Our pilgrim hosts shall safely land
 On Canaan's peaceful shore.
 There love shall have its perfect work
 And prayer be lost in praise;
 And all the servants of our God
 Their endless anthems raise.

35. BALAK AND BALAAM.

Numbers 22-24.

The children of Israel then pitched in the plains of Moab at Jericho. ¹And when Balak, the king of the Moabites, saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites and that Moab was sore afraid of the children of Israel, he sent messengers unto Balaam in Mesopotamia, to call him, saying, Come, curse me the people of Israel, for they are too mighty for me. And they departed with the rewards of divination in their hand. ²And Balaam said, Get ye into your land: for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you. Then Balak sent yet more honorable princes. And God said unto Balaam, ³Go with them; but only the word which I speak unto thee, that shalt thou do.

Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. And God's anger was kin-

dled because he went. ⁴For he loved the wages of unrighteousness. (2 Pet. 2: 15.) ⁵And the angel of the Lord placed himself in the way for an adversary against him. ⁶Now he was riding upon his ass; and the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with a sword drawn in his hand. And the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a hollow way of the vineyards, a wall being on each side. When the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again. Then the angel of the Lord went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no turn either to the right or to the left. When the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she fell down. And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with his staff. And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, ⁷What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? Balaam said unto the ass, I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now I had killed thee. ⁸Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand. And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? ⁹Behold, I am come forth to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me. Then Balaam said unto the angel of the Lord, I have sinned; if it displease thee, I will get me back again. The angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word I shall speak unto thee, thou shalt speak. So Balaam went to Balak.

In the morning Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places, that thence he might see the uttermost part of the people. ¹¹And the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and he said before all the princes of Moab,

How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?

How shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied?

Let my last end be like his!

And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and said, ¹²I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them. ¹³Balaam answered, Spake I not, saying, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord, to do either good or bad of

mine own mind; what the Lord speaketh, that will I speak?
And ¹⁴behold, I will tell thee what shall be in the latter days:

There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob,
And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite through the corners (princes) of Moab;
Out of Jacob shall One have dominion.

And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place;
and Balak also went his way.

- ¹ Why did Balak send for Balaam?
- ² What was Balaam's reply to the messengers of Balak?
- ³ What did God say to Balaam, when Balak sent yet more honorable princes?
- ⁴ How then did he kindle the anger of God, when he went?
- ⁵ Who resisted him on the way?
- ⁶ In what manner?
- ⁷ What, at last, did Balaam's ass say?
- ⁸ What did Balaam see, when his eyes were opened?
- ⁹ What did the angel say to him?
- ¹⁰ What was Balaam's reply to the angel?
- ¹¹ What words did the Lord put into Balaam's mouth?
- ¹² How did Balaam's words please Balak?
- ¹³ What did Balaam answer him?
- ¹⁴ How did Balaam prophesy of the Messiah?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Many a person is convinced, that his intention is against the will of God; but the wages of unrighteousness will not permit him to give it up.

2. Do not be offended, if a lesser one than yourself, tells you of your sins. Balaam was reprimanded by an ass; Peter, by a cock; and many a king and emperor, by a poor servant of God.

3. An unmerited curse will be without effect; on the contrary, it is often changed to a blessing, as we learn from Balak and Balaam. Joseph said to his brethren, Ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good.

The Lord of glory is my light,
And my salvation too;
God is my strength,—nor will I fear
What all my foes can do.

36. THE FAREWELL AND DEATH OF MOSES.

Numbers 26, 27. Deut. 1-35.

Moses besought the Lord at that time, saying, ¹O Lord God, Thou hast begun to shew Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy strong hand; let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan. But the Lord hearkened not unto him, and said, ²Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter. Get thee up into the top of mount Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes, and behold the land which I shall give unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron, because ye rebelled against my word in the wilderness of Zin (34). And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying, ³Let the Lord appoint a man over the congregation, that they be not as sheep without a shepherd. And the Lord said, ⁴Take Joshua, a man in whom is the spirit, and set him before all the congregation, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may obey. And Moses did so.

And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel all these things, and said, ⁵Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. ⁶And these words, which I command thee this day, shalt be upon thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. ⁷And if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments, all these blessings shall come upon thee; blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field; blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed, when thou goest out; and the Lord shall make thee plenteous of good, and open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain of thy land in its season, and to bless all the work of thine hand. ⁸But if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, curses will overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the field; cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, cursed when thou goest out; and the Lord shall scatter thee among all peoples, from one end of the earth even unto the other, and thou shalt fear night and day, and shalt

have none assurance of thy life. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil!

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, ⁹Get thee up unto mount Nebo, and behold the land of Canaan, which I have given unto the children of Israel for a possession: and die in the mount whither thou goest up. And Moses went up unto mount Nebo. And the Lord shewed him all the land unto the hinder sea, and the south unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed. Thou hast seen it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died, according to the word of the Lord. ¹⁰And the Lord buried him in the valley, in the land of Moab; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. ¹¹And the children of Israel wept for Moses thirty days. So the days of weeping in the mourning for Moses were ended. And Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him. And the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses. ¹²And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.

¹ What did Moses pray for unto the Lord, before he died?

² What answer did he receive from the Lord?

³ What provision did Moses make when he knew that he must die?

⁴ Who was to be Moses' successor?

⁵ What did Moses say unto the people before his farewell?

⁶ How were they to observe his last words?

⁷ What did he promise, if they obeyed the voice of God?

⁸ What should overtake them, if they were disobedient?

⁹ What command did God now give unto Moses?

¹⁰ Where was Moses buried?

¹¹ How did the children of Israel mourn for Moses?

¹² What especial remark is made of Moses?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The death of Moses is instructive. We read nothing of temporal goods and property left, but only how his people, so dear to him, which had given him so much anxiety and care, yet which he had loved faithfully till his death, might walk in the ways of God and enjoy His blessing.

2. The dead are not to be forgotten, nor are they to be idolized. It was probably on account of the latter, that the grave of Moses was never found.

3. No one in God's kingdom stands so high and is so gifted as to be indispensable. The Lord keeps a reserve corps, and when one falls, another moves forward. Joshua carried out what Moses had left unfinished.

The saints of God, from death set free,
With joy shall mount on high:
The heavenly host, with praises loud
Shall meet them in the sky.

37. THE DESTRUCTION OF JERICHO.

Josh. 1-6.

After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said unto Joshua, ¹Arise, go over this Jordan, unto the land which I have given you. Be strong and of good courage, and let not this book of the law depart out of thy mouth: for then shalt thou be prosperous and have good success. ²And Joshua sent two spies, who came unto Jericho into the house of a woman named Rahab, and lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to search out the land. ³And the king sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men. ⁴But the woman hid the men on the roof, and covered them with stalks of flax, and said, Yea, the men came unto me, but I knew not whence they were; at the shutting of the gate, when it was dark, they went out: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. And the men pursued after them. But the woman came up unto the men upon the roof and said, ⁵I know that the Lord hath given you the land; your terror is fallen upon us, for we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you, when ye came out of Egypt. Now therefore swear unto me, that ye will save alive my father's whole house. And the men did so. Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall. ⁶So the two men returned unto Joshua and told him all.

⁷Now when the people went forth to pass over Jordan, and the priests bare the ark of the covenant before the people,

and were come unto Jordan and dipped their feet in the brink of the water, that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon a heap; and those that went down toward the salt sea, were wholly cut off. And Israel passed on dry ground over Jordan. ⁸And they set up twelve stones in the place where the priests stood; and they took up twelve other stones out of Jordan and afterward set them up in Gilgal, that children and children's children should remember the great deed of God and fear the Lord their God forever. ⁹When the priests which bare the ark were come up out of Jordan and the soles of their feet were lifted up unto the dry ground, the waters of Jordan returned and flowed as aforetime. And the children of Israel kept the passover and ate of the corn of the land on the morrow after the passover; and the manna ceased after they had eaten of the corn of the land.

And the Lord said unto Joshua, ¹⁰See, I have given into thine hand Jericho. Let all the men of war go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. ¹¹But on the seventh day shall the priests bear seven trumpets before the ark: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with their trumpets. All the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city shall fall down. And Joshua said these things unto the people and commanded them, Ye shall not shout nor let your voice be heard, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you. So they did six days. But on the seventh day, they rose early at the dawning, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And at the seventh time, when the priests blew with their trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city. The city and all that is therein shall be devoted to the Lord. So the people shouted. ¹²And the wall fell down, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him; and they took the city.

¹ What did the Lord command of Joshua?

² What did he do first?

³ What did the king of Jericho demand of Rahab?

⁴ How did Rahab favor the spies?

⁵ Why did she do so?

⁶ Where did the men go then?

⁷ How did the people pass over Jordan?

⁸ What did the people do thereafter?

⁹ What happened after the passage of Jordan?

¹⁰ What were the people to do for six days?

¹¹ What on the seventh day?

¹² What took place after this?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Care is necessary, even when doing something according to divine command. Joshua knew that God would give Jericho into his hands, yet he sent out spies.

2. Neither high walls, nor mountains of hindrances can restrain and stop the work of him, who undertakes all things with, and for God.

3. The rule confirmed by Christ, "the first shall be the last and the last shall be first" (Matt. 19:30), was in force already in the old covenant. A woman in bad repute became a believer and was saved, while the king and the other inhabitants of Jericho remained in their unbelief and perished.

Come, sound His praise abroad,
 And hymns of glory sing;
 Jehovah is the sovereign God
 The universal King.
 Today attend His voice,
 Nor dare provoke His rod;
 Come, like the people of His choice,
 And own your gracious God.

38. ACHAN'S TRESPASS.

Josh. 7.

¹When the children of Israel had conquered Jericho, Achan took of the devoted thing. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel. ²Now when Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, they fled before the men of Ai. ³And the hearts of the people melted, and Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face until evening, he and the elders of Israel, and they put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast Thou brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to cause us to perish? ⁴And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up: wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned. I will not be with you any more, except ye destroy the devoted thing. ⁵So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel near by their tribes;

and the tribe of Judah was taken. And he brought near the family of Judah and took the family of the Zarhites. And he brought near the family of the Zarhites man by man; and Zabdi was taken. And he brought near his household man by man, and Achan was taken.

And Joshua said, ⁶My son, give glory to the Lord, what hast thou done? And Achan answered, ⁷Of a truth, I have sinned against the Lord; I saw among the spoil a goodly Babylonish mantle, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold, then I coveted them, and took them. And behold they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent. So Joshua sent messengers; and, behold, it was hid in his tent. And they took them from the tent, and brought them unto Joshua. ⁸And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee. And all Israel stoned him with stones and they burned them with fire, and raised over him a great heap of stones. ⁹Then Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai, and they smote the men of Ai.

¹ What had Achan done when Jericho was taken?

² How did Joshua's men fare before the city of Ai?

³ What impression did this defeat make upon the people?

⁴ Why could Israel not win the victory?

⁵ How were the devoted thing and the guilty person discovered?

⁶ What did Joshua say to Achan?

⁷ What was Achan's reply?

⁸ What sentence was passed against Achan?

⁹ What did they do to the men of Ai?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The sin of a single person often prevents much good and discourages the hearts of many.

2. Avarice is a shameful vice, especially when it seeks to acquire what is holy unto God, that is, what was consecrated to Him.

3. A devoted or accursed thing in a congregation must be sought out and removed, else the anger of God will be kindled against the whole congregation.

Take the name of Jesus ever,
As a shield from every snare;
If temptations round you gather,
Breathe that holy name in prayer.

39. JOSHUA'S VICTORIES AND DEATH.

Josh. 9-24.

¹When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, they did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine skins, old, and rent, and bound up; and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provisions was dry and mouldy. And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said, ²Thy servants are come from a very far country because of the name of the Lord thy God: for we have heard the fame of Him and all that He did in Egypt. Wherefore our elders said, Take provision in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: and now make ye a covenant with us. This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry and is become mouldy: and these wine-skins, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey. And the men took of their provisions and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord. ³And Joshua made a covenant with them, to let them live. And the princes of the congregation sware unto them. ⁴When the children of Israel journeyed, they came unto their cities on the third day, and smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them.

⁵And behold, five kings of the Amorites went up against the people of Israel. And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hands; there shall not a man of them stand before thee. Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly; and the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and he slew them with great slaughter at Gibeon. ⁶And as they fled from before Israel, the Lord cast down great stones (hailstones) from heaven upon them, and they died. And more died with the hailstones than the children of Israel slew with the sword. ⁷Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still. And the sun stayed in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.—Thus the Lord gave all the

land unto Israel, and all their enemies into their hands. And not one thing failed of all the good things which the Lord spake unto the house of Israel; all were come to pass.

And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and said, ⁸Now fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth. If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. ⁹And the people answered and said, We will serve the Lord, for He is our God. And Joshua said, Ye cannot serve the Lord, for He is an holy God, a jealous God; He will not forgive your sins. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the Lord. ¹⁰And Joshua, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in Timnath-serah, in the mountains of Ephraim. ¹¹And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem.

¹ By what craft did the inhabitants of Gibeon save themselves?

² What did the ambassadors say to Joshua?

³ What did Joshua and the princes of the people do then?

⁴ How was the deception discovered?

⁵ What did Joshua do unto the five kings of the Amorites?

⁶ What happened when the enemies fled from before Israel?

⁷ What other miracle occurred on the same day?

⁸ What did Joshua say unto the heads of the tribes which he had gathered in Shechem?

⁹ What was their reply?

¹⁰ How old was Joshua when he died, and where was he buried?

¹¹ Where did they bury the bones of Joseph?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Thou shalt not steal—shalt not try to gain thy neighbor's property either by force, or with the semblance of right.

2. Many a person has acquired great wealth through craft and fraud but lost his soul.

3. He who keeps his promise, even if it was obtained by deceitful means and to his own disadvantage, fears God and is truly a man.

4. Let Joshua's choice be your choice. But whoever wishes to serve the Lord, must quit the service of all other lords; for—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfill,
To do on earth our Father's will

As angels do above:

To walk with Christ, the living Way
With all Thy children and obey
The law of Christian love.

40. GIDEON.

Judges 2-8.

¹When Joshua had died, and also all that generation, there arose another generation, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the work which He had wrought for Israel. They did evil in the sight of the Lord and followed other gods. ²So the Lord delivered them into the hands of their enemies. Thus He delivered the children of Israel into the hands of the Midianites seven years. And the children of Israel made them dens in the mountains, and caves. ³And when Israel had sown, the Midianites came up against them, and left no substance in Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. For they came up with their cattle and their tents, they came in as locusts for multitude; both they and their camels were without number: and they came into the land to destroy it.

And Gideon was beating out wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor. ⁴Go, save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. And Gideon said unto God, ⁵If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there be dew on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the ground, then I shall know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand. And it was so. For he rose up early on the morrow, and pressed out the dew, a bowlful of water. And Gideon said unto God, Let not Thine anger be kindled against me, and I will speak but this once. Let me prove but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night, for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

⁶Then Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early. And the Lord said unto Gideon. The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, ⁷lest Israel vaunt themselves, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, Whosoever is fearful, let him return. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand. And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many, Bring them down unto the water. So he brought the people unto the water. And the Lord said

unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth was three hundred men; but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink. ⁸And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you; let all the people go every man unto his place.

⁹And Gideon divided the three hundred men into three companies, and put into the hands of all of them trumpets, and empty pitchers, with torches within. And he said unto them, Look on me, and as I do so shall ye do. When I blow the trumpet, and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp and say, For the Lord, and for Gideon. So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him came unto the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; when they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the pitchers with their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and cried, ¹⁰The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon. And all the host fled, and the Midianites lifted up their heads no more. Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us. And Gideon said, ¹¹I will not rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you.

¹ What is said of the generation that arose after Joshua's death?

² How did the Lord punish their defection?

³ How did the Midianites treat them?

⁴ What did the angel of the Lord say unto Gideon?

⁵ What sign did he ask of God?

⁶ What did Gideon do then?

⁷ Why did God say, The people are too many?

⁸ How many of the twenty-two thousand men was Gideon to retain?

⁹ How did Gideon prepare himself for the attack?

¹⁰ What was their battle-cry?

¹¹ What was Gideon's reply when they said, Rule thou over us?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Whoever turns away from God, leaves the source of all blessings and of life, and falls into the power of his enemies.

2. God's mercy is without bounds. Although they are unworthy of it, He always meets sinful man with renewed help and grace.

3. The Almighty needs not great numbers; He can help with few as well as with many.

God ruleth on high,
Almighty to save;
And still He is nigh —
His presence we have.

41. THE STORY OF SAMSON.

Judges 13-16.

¹The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. ²And the Lord raised up Samson as judge, who was a Nazarite unto God from his childhood, and was very strong. ³Once he went down to Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. And Samson rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand. ⁴After a time he returned, and, behold there was a swarm of bees in the carcass of the lion, and honey. And he took it, and ate of it. And Samson made a marriage feast at Timnath with the daughter of a Philistine, and said to the guests, ⁵Let me now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can declare it me within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of raiment: but if you cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty linen garments, and thirty changes of raiment. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle. And he said, ⁶Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.—And they could not declare the riddle, and said unto Samson's wife, ⁷Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us his riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house. Then Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. ⁸And she wept before him; and he told her, because she pressed him sore. And she told the riddle to the children of her people. ⁹Then the men said unto him on the seventh day, What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? And he said unto them, If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

But it came to pass after a while, in the time of the wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife. And her father said, I thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion. ¹⁰And Samson went and caught three

hundred foxes, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand between every two tails, and set the brands on fire, and let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and the standing corn, and the vineyards and oliveyards. Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they said, Samson, because they have taken his wife. ¹¹Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah. And they of Judah bound Samson with two new ropes and brought him to the Philistines. When he came, the Philistines shouted as they met him. ¹²But the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and the ropes that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands dropped from off his hands. And he found a jawbone of an ass, and took it, and smote a thousand men.

¹³It came to pass afterward that he loved a woman, whose name was Delilah. The lords of the Philistines came unto her and said, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver. ¹⁴And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth. As she pressed him daily with her words, his soul at last was vexed, and he said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head, for I have been a Nazarite unto God from by mother's womb. If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me. ¹⁵Then Delilah called for the lords of the Philistines. And she made him sleep upon her knees, and called for a man to shave off the seven locks of his head. And his strength went from him. ¹⁶And the Philistines laid hold on him, and put out his eyes, and they brought him to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass, and he did grind in the prison. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again.

And the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, for they said, Our god hath delivered our enemy Samson into our hand. ¹⁷And they called for Samson out of the prison to make sport before them: and they set him between two pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house resteth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women, and there were upon the roof about three thousand, that beheld while Samson made sport. ¹⁸And Samson called unto the

Lord, O Lord God, remember me, and strengthen me, O God, only this once. And he took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, the one with his right hand, and other with his left, and said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might. And the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

- ¹ How does this story begin?
- ² Whom did the Lord now raise up as judge in Israel?
- ³ How did Samson prove his strength?
- ⁴ What did he find after a few days in the carcass of the lion?
- ⁵ What did Samson say to the guests at the marriage-feast?
- ⁶ What was his riddle?
- ⁷ What did the Philistines say to Samson's wife?
- ⁸ How did Samson's wife learn the riddle?
- ⁹ How did the Philistines solve it?
- ¹⁰ How did Samson take revenge on them?
- ¹¹ What did the Philistines and the men of Judah do now?
- ¹² What did Samson do then?
- ¹³ What did the Philistines say to Delilah, Samson's wife?
- ¹⁴ How did Delilah discover the secret of Samson's strength?
- ¹⁵ How was Samson now deprived of his strength?
- ¹⁶ What did the Philistines do with him?
- ¹⁷ Why did they bring him up out of prison?
- ¹⁸ What was Samson's prayer, and what did he do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Great people make mistakes too. Samson was a great and a strong man, a Nazarite unto God; but he took in succession two heathen wives, and they proved his destruction.

2. "Trust, but see whom." Whoever entrusts secrets to others, must bear the blame himself, if later on he is betrayed and outwitted.

3. God used Samson, as a scourge to punish the idolatrous oppressors of His people; we ought never to say: I will serve you back as you serve me.

A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify;
 A never dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky.
 To serve the present age, my calling to fulfill;
 Oh may it all my powers engage to do my Master's will.

42. RUTH, THE MOABITESS.

Ruth 1-4.

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. ¹And a certain man of Bethlehem, Elimelech, went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife and his two sons Mahlon and Chilion. And Elimelech died, and Naomi was left, and her two sons. ²They took wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah; of the other, Ruth. When they had dwelt there about ten years, Mahlon and Chilion died. ³Then Naomi arose with her two daughters-in-law, and returned from the country of Moab. And on the way she said unto her two daughters-in-law, ⁴Go, return: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. Then she kissed them. And they lifted up their voice and wept. ⁵And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and returned. But Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Return thou also; ⁶and Ruth said, Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die; aught but death shall part thee and me. So they came to Bethlehem.

It was in the beginning of barley harvest. ⁷And Ruth went and gleaned ears of corn; and the field belonged unto Boaz, who was of the family of Naomi's husband. And Boaz came and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you! And they answered him, The Lord bless thee. Then Boaz said, Whose damsel is this? And the servant that was set over the reapers said, It is the Moabiteess that came back with Naomi; she hath continued even from the morning until now, and tarried little in the house. ⁸Then said Boaz unto Ruth, My daughter, go not to glean in another field, but abide here fast by my maidens; where they reap go thou after them. I have charged the young men that they shall not touch thee; and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink. Then she said, ⁹Why have I found grace in thy sight, seeing I am a stranger? ¹⁰And Boaz said, It hath been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband. The Lord recompense thy work. At mealtime come thou hither, and eat. And she sat beside the reapers; he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left thereof. When she was risen up to glean, Boaz com-

manded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: also pull out some for her from the bundles, and leave it and let her glean, and rebuke her not.

So she gleaned in the field until even, and she beat it out; and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. And she brought forth, and gave to her that she had left after she was sufficed. Then said her mother-in-law, Where hast thou gleaned today? And she said, The man's name is Boaz. And Naomi said, Blessed be he of the Lord. So she gleaned unto the end of harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law. ¹¹And Naomi said, Boaz winnoweth barley in the threshingfloor. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and go down to the threshingfloor. And she went down unto the threshingfloor, and did as her mother-in-law bade her, and said unto Boaz, Spread thy skirt over thine handmaid: for thou art a near kinsman. ¹²But Boaz said, it is true that I am a near kinsman: howbeit there is one nearer than I. If he will not take thee then I will take thee, as the Lord liveth.

When she came to her mother-in-law, she told her everything and said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law. Then she said, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not rest, until he have finished the thing this day. ¹³Now Boaz went up and said unto the near kinsman, Wilt thou redeem the parcel of land, which was Elimelech's? And he said, I cannot redeem it: buy it for thyself. ¹⁴So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife.

¹ What happened, when a famine had arisen in the land?

² What did the sons of Elimelech do, when he had died?

³ Where did Naomi go, when her two sons had died?

⁴ What did she say to her two daughters-in-law?

⁵ What did Orpah do?

⁶ What was Ruth's answer?

⁷ What did Ruth do after they had arrived at Bethlehem?

⁸ How did Boaz treat her?

⁹ What did she say unto Boaz?

¹⁰ What beautiful reply did he give?

¹¹ What advice did Naomi give her?

¹² What did Boaz say?

¹³ What did the other near kinsman answer Boaz?

¹⁴ What did Boaz do then?

APPLICATIONS.

1. A widow has much sorrow; but where three are in one house, the measure of adversity runs over.

2. The most tender, purest and most intimate friendship has its foundation in religion. "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

3. How beautiful it is for relatives to assist one another and show kindness in times of need, especially when the wealthy, like Boaz, do so towards the poor.

4. Whoever honors God the Lord, him will He honor in turn. Ruth, who as a heathen learned to know God and served Him in sincerity, became the grandmother of David, a member in the lineage of the Messiah.

Thou on the Lord rely, so safe thou shalt go on:

Fix on His word thy steadfast eye, so shall thy work be done.—

Thy everlasting truth, Father, Thy ceaseless love,

Sees all Thy children's wants and knows what best for each will prove.

43. ELI AND SAMUEL.

1 Sam. 1-4.

In the times of Eli the high priest, who judged Israel forty years, there was a man, whose name was Elkanah, and Hannah his wife. And Hannah had no children. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore, and said, ¹O Lord of hosts, wilt Thou give unto thine handmaid a son, then I will give him unto the Lord. And as she continued praying before the Lord, Eli who sat on his seat by the doorpost of the temple of the Lord, remarked her mouth; for Hannah spake in her heart; her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. ²Therefore Eli thought she had been drunken, and said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? And Hannah answered, ³No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit: I have poured out my soul before the Lord. Then Eli answered and said, ⁴Go in peace: the God of Israel grant thy petition that thou hast asked of Him. So Hannah went her way, and her countenance was no more sad. And the Lord remembered her. And she bare a son and named him Samuel, saying, ⁵Because I have asked him of the Lord. And when she had weaned him, she brought him to Eli. And she said, ⁶Oh, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying for

this child. Now the Lord hath given me my petition. Therefore I also grant him to the Lord as long as he shall live, because he is granted of the Lord. And Hannah worshiped the Lord, and said,

My heart exulteth in the Lord,
The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:
He bringeth low, and lifteth up.

'But the sons of Eli were sons of Belial. Now Eli was very old and he heard all that his sons did. And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear. But they hearkened not unto their father. The child Samuel, however, was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men. And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said, ^sThus saith the Lord, Thou honorest thy sons above me. Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, harm shall come upon thine house; thy sons shall die in one day.

And Samuel lay in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. And the Lord called Samuel. And he said, Here am I, and ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I, for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went. The Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I, for thou calledst me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again. And the Lord called Samuel the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And Eli perceived that the Lord called the child; and he said unto him, ^oGo lie down: and if He call thee, thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the Lord came, and called as aforesaid, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel said, Speak, for Thy servant heareth. And the Lord said to Samuel, ¹⁰Behold, I will perform against Eli all that which I have spoken concerning his house, because he knew his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And Samuel lay until morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision. Then Eli called him, and said, Samuel, what is the thing spoken unto thee? Hide it not from me.—¹¹And he said, It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good.

Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and the two sons of Eli were there with the ark of the covenant.

Israel was smitten, and there fell thirty thousand footmen. And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain. And there ran a man of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head. And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon his seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim that he could not see. And the man said unto Eli, I am he that fled today out of the army. And he said, How went the matter, my son? Then answered the messenger and said, ¹²Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been a great slaughter; and thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas are dead, and the ark of God is taken. ¹³When he made mention of the ark of God, Eli fell from his seat backward, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he judged Israel forty years.

¹ How did the godly Hannah pray unto the Lord?

² What did Eli think, and what did he say to her?

³ What was Hannah's reply?

⁴ What did Eli say to her then?

⁵ Why did she name her son Samuel?

⁶ What did she say to Eli, when she brought him the boy?

⁷ What is said of Eli's sons?

⁸ What did a man of God say to Eli?

⁹ What was Eli's advice, when Samuel thought for the third time that Eli had called him?

¹⁰ What did the Lord say to Samuel?

¹¹ What did Eli say to this?

¹² What news did the messenger bring from the battlefield?

¹³ What happened to Eli?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Judge not according to appearances, for you may thereby often greatly wrong others. Eli supposed that Hannah was drunk, when she was silently praying to God.

2. Parents, who are too lenient and allow their children to have their own will, must later on deplore it bitterly, when their error can no longer be corrected.

3. God calls many a man, but he hears Him not; He speaks to us all every day, but only very few perceive it. Blessed is he who, like the man from Ethiopia, finds a faithful interpreter.

My God, accept my heart this day, and make it always Thine.
That I from Thee no more may stray, no more from Thee decline.
Let every thought, and work, and word to Thee be ever given;
Then life shall be Thy service, Lord, and death the gate of heaven.

44. SAUL IS CHOSEN KING.

1 Sam. 8-14.

When Samuel grew old, he made his sons judges over Israel. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel, and said, ¹Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. The thing displeased Samuel. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, ²Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them. And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpah, and said, Now present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your thousands. So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken. ³And he brought the tribe of Benjamin near, by their families, and Saul the son of Kish was taken. And they sought him. And, Behold, he had hid himself among the stuff. And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people he was higher than any of them from his shoulders upward. ⁴Then all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. ⁵But certain sons of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no present. But he was as though he had been deaf.

⁶Then Nahash the king of the Ammonites encamped against Jabesh-gilead, and said, I will thrust out all your right eyes. Then came the messengers to Saul and spake these words in the ears of the people. And all the people lifted up their voice and wept. And behold, Saul came, following the oxen out of the field, and said, What aileth the people that they weep? And they told him the words of the men of Jabesh. ⁷And the Spirit of God came upon him, and he sent messengers throughout all the borders of Israel and called the people to battle. ⁸And the dread of the Lord fell upon the people, and three thousand men came out as one man, and smote the Ammonites, and they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together. And the people said unto Samuel, ⁹Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men that we may put them to death. ¹⁰But Saul said, There

shall not a man be put to death this day: for today the Lord hath wrought deliverance in Israel.

¹ What did the elders say to Samuel?

² What did the Lord, who was displeased, say to Samuel?

³ Who was chosen by lot at the election for king?

⁴ How did the people greet him?

⁵ But what did a few of them say?

⁶ What did the king of the Ammonites do and say?

⁷ What happened to Saul and what did he do?

⁸ And what did the people do?

⁹ How did they desire to treat Saul's opponents?

¹⁰ What reply did Saul give the people intoxicated by victory?

APPLICATIONS.

1. A thing is not necessarily good, because others have it. Israel wanted a king like the heathen people had.

2. If God always did what we wish, it would often harm us more than help us. Israel wanted a king, and God gave them one in His wrath.

3. It is much more honorable, if the office seeks the man than the man the office.

4. Everything went well as long as Saul yielded to the Spirit of God, but when an evil spirit ruled him, he retrograded towards destruction.

Oh worship the King, all-glorious above,
And gratefully sing His power and His love;
Our Shield and Defender, the ancient of days,
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

45. SAUL'S DISOBEDIENCE AND HIS REJECTION.

1 Sam. 15.

And Samuel said unto Saul, hearken thou unto the word of the Lord. ¹Thus saith the Lord, I have marked that which Amalek did to Israel when he came up out of Egypt. (26.) Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy them and all that they have. ²And Saul smote the Amalekites; but he spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and would not utterly destroy them: but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, ³It repenteth me, that I have set up Saul to be king: for he hath not per-

formed my commandments. And Samuel cried unto the Lord all night, and arose early to meet Saul in the morning.

Now when Samuel came to Saul, Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? ⁴Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice them unto the Lord thy God, the rest we have utterly destroyed. ⁵Then Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? Wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord? Hath the Lord as great delight in sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? ⁶Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.

Then Saul said unto Samuel, ⁷I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obey their voice. And as Samuel turned about to go away, Saul laid hold upon the skirt of his robe, and rent it. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou. Then Saul said, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord. ⁸Then Samuel went to Ramah, and came no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, that the Lord repented that He had made Saul king over Israel.

¹ Why was Saul to destroy the Amalekites?

² How did he carry out God's commandment?

³ What did the Lord say to Samuel on account of this?

⁴ How did Saul try to excuse his disobedience?

⁵ What did Samuel say?

⁶ What else did he say?

⁷ What was Saul's reply to this reprimand?

⁸ Where did Samuel go now?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Half an obedience is no obedience. It is not even proper for a king to treat God's word arbitrarily, to subject it to faultfinding and to wrest it.

2. If you possess ill gotten gains, never presume to offer them to God. Such a one "is as he that breaketh a dog's neck" (Is. 66:3).

3. It is nothing but pride, when men set aside God's word and act according to their own will. They thereby set themselves above God.

4. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pet. 5:5). When Saul was little in his own sight he was raised up; but when he thought that he was great and mighty, he was cast down.

Oh, for a heart to praise my God, a heart from sin set free! —
 A humble, lowly, contrite heart, believing true and clean;
 Which neither life nor death can part from Him that dwells within!

46. THE ANOINTING OF DAVID.

1 Sam. 16.

The Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? ¹Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. ²And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. ³And the Lord said, take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice. And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee. Samuel did that which the Lord spake, and came to Bethlehem. ⁴And the elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, Comest thou peaceably? He said ⁵Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they were come, he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, ⁷Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; I have rejected him. For the Lord seeth not as man seeth. A man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. And Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The Lord hath not chosen these. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come

hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, of fair eyes, and goodly to look upon. ⁸And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit troubled him. ⁹And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me a man that can play well on the harp, and bring him to me. Then answered one of the young men, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite that is cunning in playing, a man of valor, and a man of war, and prudent in speech, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him. Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, ¹⁰Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep. And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armor-bearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David stand before me; for he hath found favor in my sight. ¹¹When now the evil spirit was upon Saul, David took the harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

¹ What did the Lord say unto Samuel?

² What was Samuel's reply?

³ How was he to proceed?

⁴ How did the elders of Bethlehem receive him?

⁵ What answer did he give them?

⁶ What were his thoughts when he saw Eliab?

⁷ What did the Lord say unto Samuel?

⁸ What did the Lord say when David entered?

⁹ What did Saul say unto his servants, when an evil spirit troubled him?

¹⁰ What was his message to Jesse, David's father?

¹¹ What did David do, when the evil spirit was upon Saul?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It has always been God's pleasure to choose small, unpretending and lowly things to make them great and thus magnify His grace (Comp. 1 Cor. 1:26 ss.).

2. Whoever wishes to rise in God's kingdom, must first go far down. David could become king only after many great humiliations.

3. Evil spirits may indeed be repressed for a time by all kinds of entertainments; but they can be banished altogether only by the omnipotence and grace of God.

Oh, may that mind in us be formed,
Which shone so bright in Thee!
A humble, meek, and lowly mind,
From pride and envy free.

47. DAVID AND GOLIATH.

1 Sam. 17.

The Philistines gathered together their armies to battle against Judah. And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and there was a valley between them. ¹And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. ²And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was clad with a coat of mail. And the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a javelin of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and his shield-bearer went before him. And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, ³Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me; if he kill me, then we will be your servants: but if I kill him, then shall ye be our servants. When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were greatly afraid.

⁴Now David returned from Saul, to feed his father's sheep, when the three eldest brethren had gone to the war. ⁵And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren these ten loaves and these ten cheeses, and bring them unto the captain, and look how thy brethren fare. And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and came to the place of the wagons. And the host was going forth to fight and was in battle array. And David ran to the army and saluted his brethren. And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion Goliath, and spake the same as before; and David heard it. But all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid, and said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? The man who killeth him the king will greatly enrich, and will give him his daughter. Then David said unto the men that stood by him, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine? And Eliab his brother heard when he spake unto the men, and his anger was kindled against David, and he said, ⁶Why hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. David answered, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, ⁷Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go. And Saul said to David, ⁸Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, ⁹The Lord that delivered me from the lion, and from the bear, will deliver me from this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord shall be with thee. And Saul clad David with his apparel, and put an helmet of brass upon his head, and clad him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his apparel, and assayed to go; for he had not proved it. ¹⁰Then David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And he put them off him. ¹¹And he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David and the shield-bearer went before him. When the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, ¹²Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And he cursed David, and said, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air. Then said David to the Philistine, ¹³*Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel whom thou hast defied.* This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from off thee, and give thy carcass unto the fowls of the air, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hand.

When the Philistine arose and drew nigh unto David, David hastened and ran toward the Philistine. ¹⁴And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. As David had no sword in his hand, he ran, and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of its sheath, and slew him.

and cut off his head therewith. ¹⁵When the Philistines saw, that their champion was dead, they fled; and the children of Israel pursued them and smote them. And David took the head of the Philistine and his armor.

¹ Who came forth out of the camp of the Philistines?

² How was this giant armed?

³ What did he call to the army of Israel?

⁴ Where was David at that time?

⁵ Where had his father sent him?

⁶ How did his brethren receive him?

⁷ What did David say to King Saul?

⁸ What was Saul's reply?

⁹ What did David answer?

¹⁰ Why did he put off Saul's armor?

¹¹ How did he arm himself?

¹² What did Goliath say to him?

¹³ What was David's reply?

¹⁴ What did David do now?

¹⁵ What effect did this have upon the Philistines?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Let not the mighty man glory in his might (Jer. 9:23). There is One, who is stronger than all; He, in whose high name little David went to meet the giant, bragging champion.

2. Not the braggarts, but the humble and seemingly insignificant children of God are the ones who do great things.

3. Only be sure that you are acting according to the will of God, then you may let the people upbraid you and accuse you of presumption,—if only you do good.

Sure I must fight, if I would reign;

Increase my courage, Lord!

I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,

Supported by Thy word.

48. DAVID AND JONATHAN.

1 Sam. 18-20.

¹When David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Now the women came out of all the cities, singing, to meet king Saul, and they sang, ²Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth, and this saying displeased him; and

he said, ³They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me but thousands: what can he have more but the kingdom? ⁴And Saul eyed David from that day forward. And Saul was in the midst of his house: and David played with his hand, as he did day by day. ⁵And Saul had a javelin in his hand, and cast it; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall. And David avoided out of his presence twice, and he smote the javelin into the wall. And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should slay David. ⁶But Jonathan loved David as his own soul, and said, Let not the king sin against his servant David; because he hath not sinned against thee. And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan, and sware, As the Lord liveth, he shall not be put to death. But an evil spirit was upon Saul, and he again cast a spear at David. But David slipped out of Saul's presence, and the spear went into the wall.

⁷David fled and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And Saul sent messengers to take David. ⁸And David fled from Ramah, and said before Jonathan, Deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thee. But if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldest thou bring me to thy father? And Jonathan said unto David, Come let us go out into the field. And they went out into the field. And Jonathan said, ⁹The Lord the God of Israel be witness when I have sounded my father tomorrow or the third day if there be good or evil toward David; if I disclose it not unto thee, the Lord do so and much more to me. So Jonathan made a covenant, for he loved him as his own soul. ¹⁰Then Jonathan said to David, After three days go down quickly and hide thyself and remain by the stone Ezel. And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark. And, behold, I will send the lad, saying, Go find the arrows. If I say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for there is peace to thee, and no hurt. But if I say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the Lord hath sent thee away. And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the Lord is between thee and me forever. So David hid himself in the field.

On the morrow after the new moon, that David's place

was empty, Saul said unto Jonathan his son, ¹¹Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday nor today? And when Jonathan tried to excuse David, Saul's wrath was kindled, and he said, ¹²Thou son of perverse rebellion, do I not know, that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own shame and unto shame of thy mother? For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him to me, for he shall surely die. And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore should he be put to death? what hath he done? Then Saul cast a spear at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to put David to death. So he arose from the table, and did eat no meat that day: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

¹³In the morning Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him; and he said unto his lad, Run, find now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after him, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee? and cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not anything: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan gave his weapons unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city. ¹⁴As soon as the lad was gone, David arose, and fell on his face, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another and wept, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord shall be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever. And Jonathan went into the city.

¹ How did David and Jonathan become friends?

² What did the women sing after David's heroic deed?

³ What did Saul say when he heard their song of victory?

⁴ How did Saul treat David after this?

⁵ What did Saul do when David played before him?

⁶ How did Jonathan remonstrate with his father?

⁷ To whom did David flee when Saul tried a second time to put him to death?

⁸ What did David say to Jonathan?

⁹ How did Jonathan assure David of his friendship?

¹⁰ What agreement did they make with each other?

¹¹ What did Saul ask Jonathan about David?

¹² What was Saul's remark, when Jonathan tried to excuse David?

¹³ How did Jonathan inform David of his danger?

¹⁴ How did the two part?

APPLICATIONS.

1. How childish it sounds, when Saul says pettishly, "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me but thousands." Yet there are still enough of such complaining and ambitious children in the world, both among the great and the small.

2. If the evil spirits of envy, anger, revenge, murder, and the like, have once taken possession of a man, he goes quickly down the inclined plane of sin to destruction.

3. Many a one is a thief, murderer, adulterer, before God, although he may not be before man. Saul would have killed David and Jonathan if God had not protected them. The intention is accepted for the deed.

When gathering clouds around I view,
And days are dark and friends are few,
On Him I lean who, not in vain,
Experienced ev'ry human pain;
He sees my wants, allays my fears,
And counts and treasures up my tears.

49. SAUL'S PERSECUTION OF DAVID.

1 Sam. 21-26.

¹David fled, and came to Nob to Ahimelech the priest. The priest gave him shew bread to eat: for there was none other bread there: and the sword of Goliath. Then David fled to Achish the king of the Philistines, and from there to the cave of Adullam, not far from Bethlehem. And Saul sought David every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.

And it was told Saul, Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi. ²Then Saul took three thousand chosen men, to seek David upon the rocks of the wild goats. And a cave was there, and Saul went in to cover his feet. Now David and his men were abiding in the innermost parts of the cave. ³And the men said unto David, Behold the day in which the Lord hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. But afterward Da-

vid's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt, and said unto his men, ⁴The Lord forbid that I should put forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed. And when Saul rose up out of the cave, David also arose afterward, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. Saul looked behind him. And David said, ⁵See the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not. ⁶And Saul wept, and said to David, Thou art more righteous than I. The Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day. And Saul went home.

Then Saul arose, and went down with three thousand men, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. ⁷And David came to the place where Saul had pitched. And David said, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee. So David and Abishai came to the people by night. And, behold, Saul lay sleeping, and his spear stuck in the ground at his head: but the people lay round about him. Then said Abishai to David, ⁸Let me smite him with the spear. And David said to Abishai, ⁹Who can put forth his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless? Take thou the spear that is at his head, and the cruse of water, and let us go. And no man saw it, nor knew it, neither did any awake; for a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them. Then David stood on the top of the mountain afar off; a great space being between them: and he cried, ¹⁰Now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his head. Then Saul knew David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king. And he said, ¹¹Wherefore dost thou pursue after me? what have I done? Then Saul said, ¹²I have sinned: return, my son David; I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes. David answered and said, Behold, the spear, O king! let one of the young men come over and fetch it. So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

¹ Where did David flee?

² Where did Saul seek him?

³ What did David's men say to him in the cave?

⁴ What was David's reply?

⁵ What did David cry after Saul, when he went his way?

⁶ How did he answer David?

⁷ Where did David come with Abishai when Saul sought him again?

⁸ What did Abishai wish to do to Saul when he was asleep?

- What did David say to him?
¹⁰ What did David call down from the mountain to Saul?
¹¹ What else did David say to Saul?
¹² What did Saul say to him?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It is not yet proof that a person is godfearing, if he does no evil because the way is blocked and the opportunity is wanting. But if a person has opportunities repeatedly and does no evil, he shows true piety.

2. A little reliance can be placed on the promises of godless people. Saul acknowledged his wrong several times and promised to pursue David no more, yet he did so again and again.

Though troubles assail, and dangers affright,
 Though friends should all fail, and foes all unite,
 Yet one thing secures us, whatever betide,
 The promise assures us, "The Lord will provide."

50. SAUL'S DEATH.

1 Sam. 27-31. 2 Sam. 1.

David said in his heart, ¹I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall not seek me any more in all the borders of Israel. ²And he arose and passed over with the six hundred men that were with him unto Achish the king of the Philistines. And when it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath, he sought no more for him. And Achish gave David Ziklag to dwell there, and David dwelt there a year and four months.

And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their hosts together, to fight with Israel. ³When Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when he enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and ⁴the men fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers overtook him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul to his armor-bearer, ⁵Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest the Philistines come and thrust me

through, and abuse me. But his armor-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. ⁶Therefore Saul took his sword, and fell upon it. When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he likewise fell upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and all his men that same day together. ⁷On the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa; and they cut off his head, and stripped off his armor, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry the tidings to the people; and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan.

After the death of Saul, behold, on the third day, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head. And when he came to David, he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. And David said unto him, Tell me, how went the matter? And he answered, The people are fled from the battle, and many of the people are fallen; and Saul and Jonathan, his son, are dead also. ⁸Then David lamented with this lamentation:

Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, nor rain, upon you:

For there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away.

Jonathan is slain upon thy high places.

I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:

Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:

Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

¹ What did David now say in his heart?

² Where did David go with his men?

³ What did Saul do when the Philistines again went to war against him?

⁴ How did Israel fare in the battle?

⁵ What did Saul, now wounded, say to his armor-bearer?

⁶ What did Saul do when he refused to obey?

⁷ What happened on the next day?

⁸ How did David lament for Jonathan?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It is permissible to go out of the way of wicked men who seek blood, if it does not conflict with office and duty.

2. "Who so diggeth a pit shall fall therein" (Prov. 26:27). The same sword which Saul drew to slay David pierced his own heart.

Abide among us as our Shield,
O Captain of Thy host;
That to the world we may not yield,
Nor e'er forsake our post.

51. DAVID IS MADE KING.

2 Sam. 2-7.

After these things David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? ¹And the Lord said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither? And He said, Unto Hebron. So David went up thither. ²And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land. ³And David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David. And he dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the city of David. And David waxed greater and greater; for the Lord the God of hosts was with him. ⁴And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an house.

David again gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand, and went with all the people, to bring up the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim. ⁵And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord with all manner of instruments, with harps, and psalteries, and with timbrels, with castanets, and with cymbals. And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out at a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart. And they brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it. ⁶And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offering and the peace offerings, he blessed the people and dealt to everyone a cake of bread and a piece of flesh and a flagon of wine. When David returned, Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet him, and said, ⁷How glorious was the king of Israel today, who uncovered himself before the handmaids of his servants as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! And David said unto Michal, ⁸I will be yet more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight. And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.

It came to pass, when the king dwelt in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies round about, that he said unto Nathan the prophet, ⁹See now, I dwell in an

house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. And Nathan said, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee. But the same night the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, ¹⁰Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? *The Lord will make thee an house. When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever.*

¹¹After this David smote all his enemies, for the Lord gave victory to David whithersoever he went. And David executed judgment and justice unto all his people. And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness? And Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, came unto David. ¹²And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

¹ Where did David now go according to the command of the Lord?

² What was done there?

³ What did David take from the Jebusites?

⁴ What did the king of Tyre send to David?

⁵ How did they bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem?

⁶ What did David do when he had offered sacrifices?

⁷ What did Michal say to David when she came to meet him?

⁸ What was David's reply?

⁹ What did David say to Nathan, when the land had become quiet?

¹⁰ What answer did the Lord give through Nathan the prophet?

¹¹ How did David rule?

¹² How did David treat the son of Jonathan?

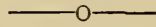
APPLICATIONS.

1. A godfearing person never takes a single step without asking the Lord in prayer.

2. A wise ruler tries not merely to enlarge his dominion, but above all things seeks to further the service of God. When David had taken the stronghold of the Jebusites, he brought the ark of the covenant from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem.

3. Be patient if in any matter you are obliged to wait. After having been anointed king for the first time, David had to wait at least ten years yet before he could ascend the throne.

In all Thy mercies may my soul Thy bounteous goodness see;
Nor let the gifts Thy hand imparts estrange my heart from Thee;
In every changing scene of life, whate'er that scene may be,
Give me a meek and humble mind, a mind at peace with Thee.



52. DAVID SINS AND REPENTS.

2 Sam. 10-12.

¹After this the children of Ammon came out, and put on the battle array against Israel, and many mighty kings went with them. ²And David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon and besieged Rabbah their chief city. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And it came to pass, that David walked upon the roof of his house, and saw a very beautiful woman. ³She was the wife of Uriah, David's servant who was with the army before Rabbah.—In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab. And he wrote, saying, ⁴Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. Now when Joab kept watch upon the city, he assigned Uriah unto the place where he knew that valiant men were. And when the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab, there fell some of the people; and Uriah died also. Then Joab sent and told David. ⁵And David sent and took Uriah's wife, and she became his wife.

⁶But the thing displeased the Lord. ⁷And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man; but he took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. ⁸And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this, is a son of death. And Nathan said to David, ⁹Thou art the man. Thou hast taken Uriah's wife to be thy

wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house; thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

And David said unto Nathan, ¹⁰I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, ¹¹The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast made the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child that is born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house.

¹²And David lay in the dust and prayed unto the Lord.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness: According to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Create in me a clean heart, O God;

And renew a constant spirit within me (Ps. 51).

¹ Who went forth to fight against Israel?

² Whom did David send against the children of Ammon?

³ Whose wife did David see from the roof of his house?

⁴ What did he write to Joab?

⁵ What did David do when Uriah was slain?

⁶ How did the Lord look upon David's evil deed?

⁷ What message did the Lord send to David by Nathan the prophet?

⁸ How did David pass judgment on himself?

⁹ What did Nathan say to him?

¹⁰ What confession did David make now?

¹¹ What was Nathan's reply?

¹² How did David repent?

APPLICATIONS.

1. There is no person so godly that he could sin no more. David was a man according to the heart of God, and yet he fell into a great and manifold sin.

2. The servants of the Lord must point out fearlessly the sins of people in high station.

3. Whoever condemns in others the sin he himself has committed thereby condemns himself (Rom. 2:1).

4. Many people sin with David, but will not repent with him; they forget the great displeasure that God expressed against David's sin.

Oh, while I breathe to Thee, my Lord,
The deep repentent sigh,
Confirm the kind, forgiving word,
With pity in Thine eye.

53. ABSALOM.

2 Sam. 14:25. Chap. 20.

¹In all Israel was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his feet even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he polled his head, the hair of his head weighed two hundred shekels. ²And Absalom prepared for him a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him. And Absalom stood beside the way of the gate. ³And when any man had a suit which should come to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Oh that I were made judge, that every man which hath any suit might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And when any man came nigh to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took hold of him, and kissed him. In this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. ⁴And Absalom went to Hebron, and he sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom is king in Hebron. And the people increased continually with Absalom.

Then came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. ⁵And David said unto his servants, Arise, let us flee; else none of us shall escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword. And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over. ⁶And the king passed over the brook Kidron, going up by the ascent of the mount of Olives, weeping; and he had his head covered, and went barefoot. And all the people that were with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. And David numbered the people that were with him, and the people went out by hundreds and by thousands. And the king commanded Joab, saying, ⁷Deal gently with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom. So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the forest of Ephraim.

And the people of Israel were smitten then before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men.

⁸And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon his mule. And when the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went on. ⁹Then Joab took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, and ten young men that bore Joab's armor compassed about and slew him. And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people. ¹⁰And they took Absalom, and cast him into the great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones. And all Israel fled every one to his tent. Now David sat at the gate. And there came a messenger and said, Peace! Blessed be the Lord. And the king said, Is it well with Absalom? And when David heard of the death of Absalom, he was much moved, and went and wept: and as he went, thus he said, ¹¹O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people had heard say that day, The king grieveth for his son.

¹ How was Absalom's personal appearance?

² What character did he try to assume?

³ How did he try to draw the people over to his side?

⁴ How did he have himself declared king?

⁵ What did David say when he heard of Absalom's revolt?

⁶ How was David's flight?

⁷ What did David say to Joab?

⁸ What happened to Absalom in this battle?

⁹ What did Joab do then?

¹⁰ How was Absalom buried?

¹¹ How did David lament for him?

APPLICATIONS.

1. In many a well-formed body dwells a vicious soul. Absalom was beautiful externally, but he had an evil, treacherous heart.

2. In the beginning, the plans of the godless seem to prove successful, but they never reach the desired end. The godless are consumed with terrors.

3. Unfaithfulness of children towards parents belongs to the

very blackest of sins; and yet it pains good parents deeply even if wayward children are unhappy.

How shall the young secure their hearts,
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy word the choicest rules imparts
To keep the conscience clean.

54. THE LAST DAYS OF DAVID.

2 Sam. 24. 1 Kings 1, 2. 1 Chron. 22-30 (21-29).

David said unto Joab his captain of the host, ¹Go now and number the people that I may know their sum. And Joab said, ²My lord, the king, are not all my lord's servants? why doth my lord require this thing? Why will he be a cause of guilt to Israel? Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Wherefore Joab departed. And all they of Israel were eight hundred thousand men, and of Judah five hundred thousand men that drew the sword. But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab. ³And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He smote Israel. And David said unto God, I have sinned, in that I have done this. ⁴And the Lord spake unto Gad the seer, saying, Go and speak unto David, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things: choose the one of them, that I may do it unto thee. Either three years of famine; or three months of flight before the sword of thy foes; or else three days the sword of the Lord, even pestilence, in the land. And David said unto Gad, ⁵I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the Lord; for very great are His mercies: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

⁶So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel; and there fell seventy thousand men. And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it. And David saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. ⁷And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned. But these sheep, what have they done? Let Thine hand, O Lord my God, be against me, but not against Thy people. ⁸And David built there an altar to the Lord, according to the word of

Gad, on the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the Lord; and He answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering. When David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshingfloor of Araunah, the Jebusite, he sacrificed there, and said, Here shall be the house of the Lord.

And David assembled all the princes of Israel unto Jerusalem and said, ⁹Hear me, my brethren, and my people: It was in my heart to build an house; but God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou art a man of war, and hast shed blood; Solomon thy son shall build my house. Now therefore observe and seek out all the commandments of the Lord. ¹⁰And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind. For the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. *If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever.* Then David gave Solomon his son the pattern of the temple, and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, and said, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed. The Lord God will be with thee.

¹¹And the princes of Israel gave for the house of God, of gold five thousand talents, of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and of iron a hundred thousand talents. Then the people rejoiced, because with a perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord. ¹²And David the king rejoiced with great joy, and said, Blessed be Thou, O Lord for ever and ever. Thine are riches, and honor, Thou rulest over all; in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength. Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee. Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly? For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee. O Lord, keep forever such thoughts in the heart of Thy people, and give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep Thy commandments. ¹³And all the congregation blessed the Lord, and sacrificed a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, and did eat and drink before the Lord on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon king, and anointed him unto the Lord to be prince.—¹⁴And David

slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. The time that he reigned over Israel was forty years.

- ¹ What command did David give to Joab, his captain of the host?
- ² What was Joab's reply?
- ³ How was God pleased with this enumeration of the people?
- ⁴ What punishment did God lay before David?
- ⁵ What did David say to Gad the prophet?
- ⁶ How many died of the pestilence?
- ⁷ What did David say when he saw the angel of the Lord?
- ⁸ What did he do according to the advice of the prophet?
- ⁹ What did David say to the princes of Israel?
- ¹⁰ How did he address Solomon his son?
- ¹¹ What did the princes give for the erection of the house of God?
- ¹² How did David rejoice over contributions?
- ¹³ What did the whole congregation do then?
- ¹⁴ How long was David king?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Things which men consider trivial may be of great offense to God. Pride and wantonness induced David to number his valiant men, and instead of trusting in God alone, he depended upon his army.

2. If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it (1 Cor. 12:26). This was true in Israel, which, with their king, formed a unity, and it is still true in bodies politic, and especially so in the Christian Church.

3. Pious parents leave to their children not only property and wealth, power and honor, but pious admonitions as well. David's parting word to Solomon is a thoughtful sermon for parents and children.

Brief life is here our portion;
 Brief sorrow, short-lived care;
 The life that knows no ending,
 The tearless life is there.
 There God, our King and Portion,
 In fulness of His grace,
 Shall we behold forever
 And worship face to face.

55. KING SOLOMON.

1 Kings 2-4.

¹Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father, and he loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; and the Lord

appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, ²O Lord my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father. I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in; give Thy servant therefore an understanding to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and evil: for who is able to judge this Thy great people? ³This pleased the Lord, and He said, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for long life, nor for riches, but hast asked for understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy word: I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither shall any arise after thee. I have given thee also that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor; and if thou wilt walk in my ways, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.—

⁴At that time there came two women unto the king, and stood before him. And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and we were together. And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me while I slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold it was dead. But when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is *my* son, and the dead is *thy* son. And this said, No; but the dead is *thy* son, and the living is *my* son. Thus they spake before the king. ⁵Then said the king, Fetch me a sword. And when the sword was brought before the king, he said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to this one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her heart yearned upon her son, and said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, It shall be neither thine nor mine, divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. ⁶And all Israel heard of the judgment; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment.

⁷And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents

and served him. ⁸And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and gazelles, and roebucks, and fatted fowl. ⁹And he had peace on all sides around about him, and Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. And Solomon had forty thousand horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. ¹⁰And God gave Solomon wisdom exceeding much: and his fame was in all the nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: also of beasts and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

¹ What was Solomon's disposition when he became king?

² What did he pray for?

³ How did his prayer please God, and what promise did God give him in addition?

⁴ What complaint did two mothers bring unto Solomon?

⁵ How did he decide their case?

⁶ What resulted from his decision?

⁷ How far did Solomon's kingdom extend?

⁸ What amount of provisions did he need daily for his court?

⁹ In what condition was his kingdom?

¹⁰ For what was Solomon especially famous?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Whoever sincerely prays to God for spiritual gifts will receive from Him the necessary temporal gifts also (Matt. 6:33).

2. It is a wicked spirit that says, "Since I have nothing, you shall not have anything either." In this way the false mother betrayed herself.

3. Children as a rule reap the fruits of the care and labors of their deceased parents, but often put them to bad use. David waged war continually; Solomon's reign was one of peace.

Thou art my portion, O my God, soon as I know Thy way,
My heart makes haste to obey Thy word, and suffers no delay.
I choose the path of heavenly truth, and glory in my choice:
Not all the riches of the earth could make me so rejoice.

56. SOLOMON BUILDS THE TEMPLE.

1 Kings 5-8.

King Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, ¹Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house for the name of the Lord. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, and behold, I purpose to build an house for the Lord, as He spake unto David my father. ²When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, Blessed be the Lord, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar and of fir. ³And Solomon had three score and ten thousand that bare burdens, and four score thousand that were hewers in the mountains (of Lebanon), besides Solomon's chief officers that were over the work, three thousand and three hundred. And the king commanded, and they hewed out great and costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders prepared timber and stones to build the house. ⁴In the fourth year of Solomon's reign the foundation was laid for the house of the Lord, and in the eleventh year the house was finished.

⁵And the temple was three score cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. And he fashioned and set up two pillars of brass before the temple; the one at the right he called Jachin (firmness), and the one at the left he called Boaz (strength). And the two pillars made (with a roof upon them) a porch before the temple twenty cubits long, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house. ⁶And he built the walls within with boards of cedar, and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir, and overlaid the house within with pure gold, and the floor with gold, so that the whole house was overlaid with gold; and he garnished the house with precious stones, and carved cherubim upon the walls. ⁷And the inside of the temple was divided into the *Holy* and the *Holy of Holies*. The *Holy* was forty cubits long, twenty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. Therein were the golden altar and the golden table on which the shewbreads were laid, and ten golden candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right and five on the left. The *Holy of Holies* was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits high and twenty cubits wide, overlaid with pure gold. Therein were the ark of the covenant with the tables of the law, the

omer of manna, and Aaron's staff. And Solomon built the court of the priests around the temple. Therein stood the altar for burnt offerings built of stone and overlaid with copper, and the brazen sea. The sea stood upon twelve oxen. Seven years was he in building the house of the Lord, and finished it.

⁸And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast of Tabernacles. And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took and brought up the ark of the Lord, and the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels. And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel were with him before the ark. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto its place. And when the priests were come out of the holy place, the cloud (the glory of the Lord) filled the house of the Lord. ⁹And the king blessed all the congregation, and stood before the altar, and spread forth his hands toward heaven; and he said, O Lord the God of Israel, behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded? Yet have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, that Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day. When Thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, if they turn again to Thee, and confess Thy name, and make supplication unto Thee in this house; when the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against Thee; if there be in the land famine, pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or caterpillar, or whatsoever plague or sickness; then hear Thou in heaven. Moreover concerning the stranger, that is not of Thy people Israel, when he shall come out of a far country and pray toward this house: hear Thou in heaven and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for: that all the peoples of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee as doth Thy people Israel.

And when Solomon had made an end of praying, he arose from before the altar, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, ¹⁰Blessed be the Lord! There hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant. The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. ¹¹And Solomon offered for peace-offering, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep, and held a feast, and all Israel with him. On the eighth day he sent the people away. ¹²And

they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shewed unto David His servant, and to Israel His people.

- ¹ What message did Solomon send to king Hiram?
- ² How did Hiram receive this message?
- ³ How many laborers did Solomon employ?
- ⁴ When was the building of the temple begun, and when was it finished?
- ⁵ How large was the building?
- ⁶ How was it finished on the inside?
- ⁷ How was it divided?
- ⁸ On what feast-day was it dedicated?
- ⁹ What did Solomon do during the dedication?
- ¹⁰ What did he say when he had ended his prayer?
- ¹¹ What was sacrificed during this feast?
- ¹² What did the people do when eight days had passed?

APPLICATIONS.

1. No sacrifice is too great for the faithful, when it behooves to glorify God and to further religion, the greatest good of man.
2. The solemn dedication of places designed for public worship is a good and ancient custom.
3. If the glory of God, if His gracious presence do not fill a house of God, and no believing congregation worships in it, all its decorations and wealth will be for nought.

O Trinity, O Unity!
Be present as we worship Thee;
And with the songs that angels sing
Unite the hymns of praise we bring.

57. THE LAST DAYS OF SOLOMON.

I Kings 9-11.

When Solomon had finished the building of the house of the Lord, the Lord appeared the second time, and said unto him, ¹I have heard thy prayer and have hallowed this house; if thou wilt walk before me, as thy father David walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom over Israel for ever, as I promised to David. ²But if ye shall turn away from following me, then will I cut off Israel out of the land, and this house will be cast down that every one

that passeth by it shall be astonished, and say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall answer, *Because they forsook the Lord their God.*

³And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare very much gold, and precious stones. And when she had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, and the house he had built, there was no more spirit in her, and she said, 'I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me. Thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are they, which stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever. ⁵And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and very many precious stones. ⁶And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire. So she turned and went to her own land, she and her servants.

⁷Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the finest gold. There were six steps to the throne, and the top of the throne was round behind. And there were stays on either side by the seat, and two lions standing beside the stays. And twelve lions stood on the one side and on the other on the steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom. All king Solomon's vessels were of gold, for silver was nothing accounted of. ⁸For the king's navy at sea with the navy of Hiram came every three years, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks. So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches, and in wisdom. And all the world sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

⁹Now Solomon loved many strange women of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. Solomon clave unto these in love. ¹⁰And when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. ¹¹And the Lord was angry with Solomon, and said, Forasmuch as thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, I will rend the kingdom from thee; but I will give

one tribe to thy son for David's sake. ¹²And Ahijah the prophet came to Jeroboam a man of valor, and laid hold of his new garment, and rent it in twelve pieces, and said, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: and if thou wilt keep my commandments, then I will do according to thy desires. ¹³The time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.

¹ What did the Lord promise Solomon when the temple was finished?

² What punishment did the Lord threaten to give him and the people?

³ Who came from a far country to see Solomon's glory?

⁴ What did the queen say to him, when she had seen all?

⁵ What presents did she give to Solomon?

⁶ What presents did Solomon give in return?

⁷ Describe Solomon's throne.

⁸ What did his navy bring every three years?

⁹ How did Solomon act contrary to God's will?

¹⁰ How did the strange wives turn his heart?

¹¹ How did the Lord punish him?

¹² To whom did the Lord send Ahijah the prophet?

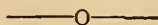
¹³ How long was Solomon's reign?

APPLICATIONS.

1. He who attains to great power and honors, must be doubly watchful lest his heart turn away from God and lose humility.

2. He who desires to be a friend of the world, will be at enmity with God (James 4:4). Therefore have no more to do with infidels and godless persons than God and duty require. The glory and honor of the world have deprived many a one of honor with God.

Teach me, my God and King, Thy will in all to see;
And what I do in anything, to do it as for Thee.
To scorn the senses' sway, while still to Thee I tend;
In all I do, be Thou the way, in all be Thou the end.



58. THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.

1 Kings 12-14.

¹King Solomon slept with his fathers, and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead. ²And all Israel came unto Rehoboam and said, Thy father made our yoke grievous; now make thou

his yoke lighter, and we will serve thee. ³And Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they said unto him, If thou wilt hear them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men, and took counsel with the young men that were grown up with him. ⁴And the young men said unto him, Thus shalt thou speak unto them, My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. ⁵When Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, they fell away from the house of David, and made Jeroboam king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

⁶And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David, if this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem. Whereupon he made two calves of gold, and set the one in Bethel, and the other in Dan. And this thing became a sin, for the people went there. ⁷And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah unto Bethel: and Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord, Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; upon thee shall he sacrifice the priests of the high places. ⁸When the king heard the saying, he put forth his hand, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand which he put forth, dried up, so that he could not draw it back again. And the king said, Entreat the Lord, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man entreated the Lord, and the hand became as it was before. And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, I will give thee a reward. And the man said, ⁹If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go with thee. For so was it charged me by the word of the Lord, Thou shalt eat no bread, nor drink water in this place. And he went away.

Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his son told him all the works that the man of God had done. Then he saddled an ass and rode after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am. Then he said, Come home with me, and eat bread. And he said, It is forbidden me by the word of the Lord. And he said, I also

am a prophet as thou art; and an angel spake unto me, saying, Bring him back with thee, that he may eat and drink. But he lied unto him. So he went back. ¹⁰But when the prophet from Judah was gone, a lion met him, and slew him, because he was disobedient unto the word of the Lord.

And Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. And Jeroboam said unto his wife, ¹¹Arise, and disguise thyself and get thee to Shiloh to Ahijah the prophet, which told me that I should be king over Israel: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child. And Jeroboam's wife went to Shiloh. Now Ahijah could not see by reason of his age. When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? I am sent thee with heavy tidings. ¹²Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the Lord, Thou hast done evil, and hast made thee other gods, and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam. Him that dieth in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine house. And when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die; he alone of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord. And Jeroboam's wife departed, and as she came to the threshold of the house the child died.

¹ Who became king in Solomon's stead?

² What did the people say to Rehoboam?

³ What counsel did the old men give him?

⁴ How did the young men counsel him?

⁵ What course did Israel take?

⁶ How did Jeroboam try to establish his throne?

⁷ What did the man of God prophesy of the false altar?

⁸ What did the king say when he heard it?

⁹ What was the prophet's reply when the king offered him a reward?

¹⁰ What happened to the prophet on account of his disobedience?

¹¹ What did Jeroboam say to his wife, when his son fell sick?

¹² What information did Ahijah the prophet give her?

APPLICATIONS.

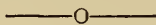
1. Children do not always walk in the footsteps of their parents. Solomon ruled with wisdom, but Rehoboam ruled most unwisely.

2. It is a great mistake for young people to suppose that they know everything better than the old people. The counsel of the aged

is based upon the experience of many years, and this is the best teacher.

3. He who founds sects and introduces false worship will work destruction for himself and his adherents.

— — — — —
To Thee we still would cleave
With ever-growing zeal;
If millions tempt us Christ to leave,
Oh let them ne'er prevail.



59. ELIJAH THE PROPHET.

1 Kings 17.

Ahab was king in Israel. ¹He took to wife Jezebel the daughter of the king of the Zidonians, worshiped Baal, and did yet more to provoke the Lord to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. And there arose Elijah the Tishbite and said unto Ahab, ²As the Lord liveth, there shall not be dew nor rain three years, but according to my word. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, ³Get thee hence, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith; I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. Elijah did according unto the word of the Lord. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening; and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. And the Lord said unto him, ⁴Get thee to Zarephath, and dwell there; I have commanded a widow there to sustain thee.

So Elijah went to Zarephath. And behold, a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her, and said, Fetch me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. Bring me also a morsel of bread. And she said, ⁵As the Lord liveth, I have but an handful of meal and a little oil, and am gathering sticks, that I may dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, ⁶Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me; afterward make for thee and thy son. The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain. And she went and did so. And she and he did eat; ⁷the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord.

⁸After these things, the son of the woman fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. And she said, O thou man of God, thou art come unto me, to bring my sin to remembrance. Elijah said unto her, ⁹Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into the chamber, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and prayed, O Lord my God, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord hearkened unto the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him unto his mother, and said, See thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, ¹⁰Now I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.

¹ What does this story say of king Ahab?

² What did Elijah the Tishbite say to him?

³ Where did the Lord now send Elijah?

⁴ What did the Lord say to him, when the brook dried up?

⁵ What did the widow say, when he asked for water and bread?

⁶ What did Elijah say to her?

⁷ How was the distress of the widow relieved?

⁸ What befell the widow's son?

⁹ What did Elijah say to her, and what did he do?

¹⁰ What did the widow say then?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If those in authority, and the prominent people transgress God's laws, the resulting evil becomes doubly great. Those in lower positions imitate their example and think themselves excusable.

2. Great sins are followed by severe punishments. God always has means for punishment, and knows how to use them.

3. God knows how to preserve His own and cares for them in a fatherly way, even if voracious birds must be the means.

4. Servants of God should be a blessing and scatter blessings wherever they go.

Is thy cruse of comfort failing, rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine it shall serve Thee and Thy
brother;

Love divine will fill thy storehouse, or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fare for one will often make a royal feast for two.

60. ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

1 Kings 18.

The word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year of the famine, saying, ¹Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went, and said unto Ahab, ²Gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred. And Ahab gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came near unto all the people, and said, ³How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him. But if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. ⁴Then said Elijah unto the people, Give us two bullocks, and lay one on the wood, and put no fire under; I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god that answereth by fire, let Him be God. ⁵And the prophets of Baal took the bullock, and dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no answer.

And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. ⁶And he built an altar, and made a trench about the altar, and put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and had water poured on the burnt offering, so that the water ran round about the altar; and filled the trench also with water. Then Elijah came near, and said, ⁷O Lord God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant. Hear me, O Lord, hear me! ⁸Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt offering. ⁹When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and said, The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal. And they took them. ¹⁰And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. ¹¹And the heaven grew black with clouds, and there was a great rain, because Elijah prayed to the Lord (Jas. 5: 18).

¹ What command did Elijah receive in the third year of the famine.

² What did Elijah say to Ahab?

³ What did he say to the people?

⁴ What else did he say?

⁵ What did the prophets of Baal do now?

- ⁶ What did Elijah do thereafter?
⁷ How did he pray when he had prepared his offering?
⁸ How did God answer him?
⁹ What did the people do when they saw God's miracle?
¹⁰ What was done unto the prophets of Baal?
¹¹ What took place thereafter?

APPLICATIONS.

1. As soon as the wicked forsakes his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, God ceases to be angry with them (Is. 55:7).

2. Forced repentance, as well as deathbed-repentance, rarely ever bring forth worthy fruit. When Ahab was famishing from hunger and saw the glory of God, he became subdued; but after it had rained he persecuted Elijah as he had done before.

3. It is something deplorable, to be undecided in matters of religion, to halt between two opinions.

4. A time is coming, not a time of grace, but of a terrible judgment, when all unbelievers and the wicked will cry out, "The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God."

Thy throne, O God, forever stands;
 Grace is the sceptre of Thy hands;
 Thy laws and works are just and right,
 Justice and grace are Thy delight.

61. ELIJAH'S FLIGHT.

1 Kings 19.

¹Jezebel sought Elijah's life; and he fled into the wilderness; and he said, ²It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life. And he lay down and slept under a juniper tree. ³And behold, an angel of the Lord touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. ⁴And he looked, and, behold, there was at his head a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water. And the angel said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. ⁵And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God; and he came thither unto a cave and lodged there.

And, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and said unto him, What doest thou here; Elijah? And he said, ⁶I have been very jealous for the Lord, and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And He said, Go forth, and

stand upon the mount before the Lord. ⁷And; behold, the Lord passed by, and a great strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire a still small voice. ⁸When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, ⁹I have been very jealous for the Lord, and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the Lord said unto him, ¹⁰Go, return on thy way; yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal.

¹ Why did Elijah flee into the wilderness?

² What did he say when he sat under the juniper tree?

³ What did the angel say to him, when he was asleep?

⁴ What did he see at his head?

⁵ What did he do now?

⁶ What was his reply when the Lord asked, "What doest thou here?"

⁷ What did he see and hear on the mount?

⁸ What did he do, when he heard a still small voice?

⁹ What was his complaint once more?

¹⁰ What did the Lord say to him now?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Our want of courage and our despondency arises principally from the fact that we trust God too little, and our own strength too much.

2. If the children of God follow their own will, if they go where they wish, like Elijah did, the Lord Himself must bring them back, if they shall not perish.

3. Do not always look upon the dark side of things, and in your discouragements do not immediately decry everybody as godless. The Lord will always keep His own, and He knows them.

Oh, watch, and fight, and pray!

The battle ne'er give o'er;

Renew it boldly every day,

And help divine implore.

62. ELIJAH'S PROPHECY AGAINST AHAB AND HIS HOUSE.

1 Kings 21. 2 Kings 9.

Naboth, the Jezreelite, had a vineyard in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab. And Ahab said, ¹Give me thy vineyard; I will give thee for it a better vineyard, or I will give thee worth of it in money. But Naboth said, ²The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his house displeased, and laid him down upon his bed, and would eat no bread. And Jezebel said, ³Let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard. So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, unto the elders of Jezreel, saying, Set two sons of Belial before Naboth, and let them bear witness, saying, Thou didst curse God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he die. And they did so; and the nobles sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. And Jezebel said to Ahab, Take possession of the vineyard, for Naboth is dead. ⁴And the word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, Go down to Ahab: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, and say, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine; and the dogs shall eat Jezebel by the rampart of Jezreel. And it came to pass, ⁵in the third year, that Ahab was smitten in battle by an arrow; and the blood ran out of the wound into the bottom of the chariot, so that he died, and was brought to Samaria. And when they washed the chariot, the dogs licked up his blood, according to the word of the Lord.

⁶Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king, and did evil in the sight of the Lord. And he fell sick and died according to the word of Elijah, when he sent messengers to ask the god of Ekron, whether he should recover. Joram, Ahab's other son, became king in his stead. ⁷Jehu was anointed king against him. And Jehu went to Jezreel, and Joram went out to meet him, and found him in the portion of Naboth. And Joram said, Is it peace? Jehu answered, ⁸What peace, so long as the wickedness of thy mother Jezebel is so great? And Joram fled, and said, There is treachery. ⁹And Jehu drew his bow, and smote Joram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, ¹⁰Cast him in the field of Naboth: for re-

member how that when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, and the word of the Lord came unto him, I will requite the blood of Naboth in this portion. ¹¹And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at the window. And as Jehu entered at the gate, he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Throw her down! And two chamberlains threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. ¹²And when Jehu was come in, he did eat and drink, and he said, Bury Jezebel. And they went, but found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again and told him. And he said, ¹³This is the word of the Lord by His servant Elijah, In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel.

¹ What did Ahab demand of Naboth? .

² What was his reply to the king?

³ What did Jezebel say to the displeased Ahab?

⁴ To whom did the Lord send Elijah, and why?

⁵ How was the word of the Lord fulfilled?

⁶ Who became king in Ahab's stead?

⁷ Who was anointed king against Joram?

⁸ What did Jehu say to Joram?

⁹ What did he do when Joram fled?

¹⁰ What did he say to Bidkar his captain?

¹¹ What fate befell queen Jezebel?

¹² What command did Jehu give now?

¹³ What did Jehu say, when he heard this? (2 Kings 9:10.)

APPLICATIONS.

1. Woe unto the people whose princes, judges and leaders misuse their power for all kinds of wrongs and deeds of violence, instead of carrying out right and justice.

2. "Likes in wrong, likes in punishment." If husband and wife lead each other to do wrong and they sin together, they will also be punished together.

3. It often seems as if the unrighteousness of men should prevail, but in a short time truth and justice will be victorious (Ps. 37:35, 36).

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink of any earthly woe! —
A faith that shines more bright and clear when tempests rage without;
That, when in danger, knows no fear, in darkness feels no doubt.

63. THE ASCENSION OF ELIJAH.

2 Kings 2.

When the Lord would take up Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me as far as Bethel. And Elisha said, As the Lord liveth, I will not leave thee. ¹So they went down to Bethel; and the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, ²As the Lord liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho; and the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came near to Elisha, and said, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry here, I pray thee: for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the Lord liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

And fifty men of the sons of prophets went, and stood over against them from afar: and they two stood by Jordan. ³And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. When they were gone over, Elijah said unto Elisha, ⁴Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken from thee. And Elisha said, ⁵Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing. ⁶And as they went on, and talked, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

⁷And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more. ⁸And he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord the God of Elijah? And when he had smitten the waters, they were divided hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on

Elisha. And they said unto him, ⁹Behold, there be with thy servant fifty strong men: let them go, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. And they urged him till he said, Send. ¹⁰They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but they found him not. And they came back to him, and he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

¹ What did the sons of the prophets say to Elisha?

² What did Elisha say to Elijah?

³ How did the two cross the Jordan?

⁴ What did Elijah say to Elisha?

⁵ What did Elisha ask of him?

⁶ How was Elijah separated from Elisha?

⁷ What did Elisha cry out after Elijah?

⁸ What did Elisha do then?

⁹ What did the sons of the prophets propose to do?

¹⁰ What did they do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The pious serve a good Lord. When they have finished the fight and have patiently borne the burden and heat of the day, they need not trouble themselves how they shall come home; the Lord has already ordered His chariots.

2. The Spirit of the Lord is an eternal and immortal Spirit; if one of His instruments has served His purpose, He chooses another, to whom he transfers office and gifts.

Lord. Thine appointed servants bless, that they may faithful be,
To preach the truth in righteousness, and sinners win to Thee.
Uphold them by Almighty power, Thy strength divine impart,
And, in each dark and trying hour, cheer Thou their fainting heart.

64. ELISHA'S MIRACLES.

2 Kings 2:4.

Elisha went up unto Bethel. ¹And there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he looked behind him and saw them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. ²And there came forth two bears out of the wood, and tore forty and two children.

Now there cried a certain woman unto Elisha, saying,

My husband is dead; and the creditor is come to take him my two children to be bondmen. And Elisha said, ³Go, borrow thee empty vessels abroad of all thy neighbors; borrow not a few. Thou shalt go in and shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and pour oil into all those vessels. And she did so. And when the vessels were full, she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. ⁴And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy creditor.

And Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman, who constrained him to eat bread. And as he oft passed by, she said unto her husband, ⁵Behold, I perceive that this is an holy man of God. Let us make a little chamber on the wall, and set there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick, that when he cometh to us, he shall turn in thither. And Elisha said, Behold, thou hast been careful for us; what is to be done for thee? Gehazi, his servant, answered, Verily she hath no son. And Elisha said, ⁶At this season when the time cometh round, thou shalt embrace a son. And the woman bare a son when the time came round, as Elisha had said. ⁷And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to his servant, Carry him to his mother. When he had taken him, he brought him to his mother, and he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. ⁸Then his mother came unto Elisha to mount Carmel, and caught hold of his feet, and told him all. And he arose and followed her. ⁹And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door, and prayed unto the Lord. And the child sneezed seven times, and then opened his eyes. And he said unto the Shunammite, Take up thy son. ¹⁰Then she fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

¹ How did the boys of Bethel mock Elisha?

² How were the mockers punished?

³ What did Elisha tell the troubled widow to do?

⁴ What did Elisha say to her after the miracle was done?

⁵ What did the woman of Shunem say to her husband?

⁶ What prophesy did he make in turn?

⁷ What happened to the child?

⁸ Where did the child's mother go when he had died?

⁹ How did Elisha restore the boy to life?

¹⁰ What did the child's mother do when he was restored to her?

APPLICATIONS.

1. What parental admonitions, and perhaps the rod could not do, had to be done at the command of God by two bears—namely, the weaning of the youthful mockers from their mockery. Ye mockers, think of it!

2. God is the true helper in need; He has proven it thousands of times, how fatherly He provides especially for widows and orphans who trust in Him. He, however, used human mediation. He also desires to make use of you (Comp. Jas. 1:27).

3. The Lord will reward him who receives His servants and shows kindness unto them (See Matt. 10:41, 42).

Thy praise, Lord, I will resound
To all the listening nations round;
Thy mercy highest heaven transcends;
Thy truth beyond the clouds extends.

—O—

65. ELISHA AND NAAMAN.

2 Kings 5.

¹Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a leper. ²Now the Syrians had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would that my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! then would he recover him of his leprosy. ³So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and stood at the door of the house. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, ⁴Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thou shalt be clean. ⁵But Naaman was wroth, and said, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and call on the name of the Lord his God. Are not the rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel? So he went away in a rage.

And his servants said, ⁶If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan. ⁷And he became clean, and returned to Elisha, and

said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore take a present of thy servant. But he said, ⁸As the Lord liveth, I will receive none. ⁹When he had gone away, Gehazi followed after him, and he took from him two talents of silver, and two changes of raiment. And Gehazi stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went not hither or thither. And he said unto him, ¹⁰Is it a time to receive money and garments? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

¹ Who and what was Naaman?

² Through whom was he made acquainted with Elisha?

³ How did he come to the house of the prophet?

⁴ What message did Elisha send to Naaman?

⁵ How did Naaman receive it?

⁶ What admonition did his servants give him?

⁷ What happened when he dipped himself in Jordan?

⁸ What did Elisha say when Naaman wished to give him a present?

⁹ What did Gehazi, Elisha's servant, do?

¹⁰ How was his avarice punished?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Never think "I am too unimportant to do good." The captive Israelitish maid, who honored God and His prophets even in a strange land, by a single word became a means for a great miracle.

2. The mind often judges quite correctly; but the heart is wanting in faith, and therefore also in humility and obedience. Naaman's statement in regard to the rivers of Damascus was literally true; but he was to learn what he could not yet do — to *believe*.

3. Avarice is a shameful vice. He, too, is a thief, who tries to acquire other people's property by means of falsehood and fraud.

In each event of life, how clear
Thy ruling hand I see!
Each blessing to my soul more dear
Because conferred by Thee.

66. ELISHA IS PURSUED BY THE SYRIANS.

2 Kings 6.

The king of Syria warred against Israel and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp. ¹But Elisha sent unto the king of Israel, saying,

Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are coming down. ²Then the king of Syria, being troubled, called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not show me which of us is for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said, ³Nay, my lord, O king: but Elisha telleth the king of Israel all that thou speakest in thy bedchamber. Behold, he is in Dothan. ⁴Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host. And when they came by night, they compassed the city about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host with horses and chariots was round about the city. And he said, ⁵Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, ⁶Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, open his eyes, that he may see. ⁷And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

And Elisha said, ⁸Lord, smite this people with blindness. And He smote them with blindness. And Elisha said unto them, Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. ⁹And he led them to Samaria. And when they were come into Samaria, Elisha said, Lord, open their eyes that they may see. And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, ¹⁰Thou shalt not smite them. Set bread and water before them that they may eat and drink, and go to their master. And he prepared a great provision for them, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away.

¹ What did Elisha do, when the Syrians warred against Israel?

² What did the king of the Syrians say to his servants?

³ What did one of them reply?

⁴ What did the king do then?

⁵ What did Elisha's servant say when he saw the horses and chariots?

⁶ What was Elisha's reply?

⁷ What happened when Elisha had prayed?

⁸ How did Elisha continue his prayer?

⁹ Where did Elisha lead the blinded Syrians?

¹⁰ What did the prophet say to the king of Israel?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It is an egregious mistake to suppose that the servants of the word of God exercised no wholesome influence upon public life and took no interest in the commonwealth.

2. The only noble and admissible revenge is like that which Israel took on the Syrians. If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink (Rom. 12:20).

God is our refuge in distress,
A present help when dangers press;
On Him for safety we relied,
And in His strength we will confide.

67. JONAH THE PROPHET.

Chap. 1-4.

In the days of Jeroboam, the king of Israel, lived Jonah the prophet. Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, saying, ¹Go to Nineveh, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. ²But Jonah fled from the presence of the Lord. And as he found a ship going to sea, he went down into it to go to sea from the presence of the Lord. ³But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, so that the ship was thought to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god. But Jonah was gone down into the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God. And they said one to another, ⁴Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. Then they said unto him, What is thy country? And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. ⁵Take me up and cast me into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. So they took up Jonah and cast him into the sea. And the sea ceased from its raging. ⁶And the Lord prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the bowels of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto God out of the fish's bowels. And it cast out Jonah upon the dry land.

And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah a second time, saying, ⁷Go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So he went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. And Jonah began

to enter the city a day's journey, and he cried and said, ⁸Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown. ⁹And the people of Nineveh believed God and repented, and the king of Nineveh arose and laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes; and made proclamation through Nineveh, saying, Let every one turn from his evil way; who knoweth whether God will not turn away from His anger, that we perish not? And God saw that they turned from their evil way, and He repented of the evil, which He said He would do unto them, and He did it not.

¹⁰But Jonah was angry, and prayed unto the Lord, and said, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I hastened to flee upon the sea: for I knew, Thou art gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil. ¹¹Then Jonah went out of the city, and sat, and made him a booth, till he might see what would become of the city. And a gourd came up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head; and Jonah was exceeding glad because of the gourd. ¹²But a worm smote the gourd that it withered. When the sun arose, the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted. So he wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live. And God said to Jonah, ¹³Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry even unto death. And the Lord said, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: and should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

¹ Where was Jonah to go and what was he to do?

² What did he do?

³ But what did God do?

⁴ What did the mariners say to one another?

⁵ What did Jonah say when the lot fell upon him?

⁶ How was Jonah's life preserved in the water?

⁷ What did the Lord say to him a second time?

⁸ What did Jonah now preach in the city?

⁹ What was the result of his preaching?

¹⁰ How did Jonah act when God preserved the city?

¹¹ What did he do now?

¹² Why was he angry once more?

¹³ What did the Lord say to him?

APPLICATIONS.

1. A servant of God should go where his Master sends him, and proclaim what He tells him. But more than one Jonah has never learned, that everyone ought to perform the duties of office and vocation as faithfully as the angels in heaven.

2. You will flee from the Lord in vain. It is a small matter for Him to overtake you in a thousand ways, and to punish you.

3. Not only a wicked world, but many of God's chosen children give Him much trouble. Never grow angry like Jonah, with God and His ways.

4. Those people are perverted, who are pleased with God's visitations of punishments and murmur, if the Lord does not immediately draw His sword of vengeance at their nod and beck.

Return, O wanderer, return,
And seek a Father's melting heart;
His pitying eyes thy grief discern,
His hand shall heal thine inward smart.

68. THE TEN TRIBES TAKEN INTO CAPTIVITY.

2 Kings 17.

¹The kingdom of Israel departed more and more from the Lord their God, and heard not the voice of Elijah and Elisha.

²At last God sent yet Amos the prophet, of Tekoah, who said, Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel: An adversary there shall be even around about the land, and thy palaces shall be spoiled. Israel shall be led captive out of his land, because ye obeyed not the voice of your God. Hosea also, the prophet, arose and cried,

³Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel! The Lord hath a controversy, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; there is swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. *Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee*, saith the Lord God.

But Israel heard not and continued to sin against the Lord. ⁴Then came up Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, and he besieged Samaria three years, and took the city, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor, and in the cities of the Medes. So Israel was carried

away out of their own land to Assyria, as the Lord had said by the prophets.

⁵And Shalmaneser brought men from Babylon, and from Hemath, and placed them in the cities of Samaria. And they feared not the Lord: therefore He sent lions among them, which killed (some) of them. Wherefore they said unto Shalmaneser, ⁶The nations which thou hast brought, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore He hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them. Then Shalmaneser sent one of the priests whom he had brought from thence to teach them the manner of the God of the land. ⁷So a priest came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the Lord. ⁸Howbeit every nation made gods of their own and also served strange gods. Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after the law which the Lord commanded the children of Israel; so did their children likewise, and their children's children, the Samaritans.

¹ What does our story say of the kingdom of Israel?

² Name the prophets the Lord sent to them last.

³ What did Hosea proclaim unto them?

⁴ What took place when Israel continued to sin?

⁵ By whom was the land peopled?

⁶ What did they say to Shalmaneser?

⁷ What did the priest do, whom Shalmaneser sent?

⁸ How did the people act?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If a member is separated from the body, or a whole corporation leaves its proper ground and basis, there can be no hope of success.

2. Not against Israel alone, but against many other nations as well as single persons, the Lord was compelled to declare; Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more. (Isa. 1: 5.)

3. Israel rejected God by means of false worship and pagan doings, and therefore the Lord rejected Israel, so that the ten tribes have utterly disappeared from history.

Arm me with jealous care

As in Thy sight to live:

And oh! Thy servant, Lord, prepare,

A strict account to give.

69. KING HEZEKIAH.

2 Kings 16-21. Isa. 36-39.

At the time when Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria destroyed the kingdom of Israel, king Hezekiah sat on the throne of the kingdom of Judah. ¹He did that which was pleasing in the sight of the Lord. And this was needful. For Ahaz his father had not done that which was pleasing in the sight of the Lord; he made brazen images, and even sacrificed his sons, and closed the doors of the temple of the Lord. And therefore the Lord gave him into the hands of the king of Assyria. ²But Hezekiah opened the doors of the temple, and gathered together the priests, and said, Sanctify yourselves, that ye sanctify the house of the Lord; for our fathers have done that which was displeasing in His sight, and have forsaken the house of the Lord, have closed its doors, and put out the lamps, and brought no sacrifices. Wherefore the wrath of the Lord has come upon Jerusalem, and our sons, and our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and daughters, and wives, are in captivity for this. And Hezekiah sent runners through Judah and Israel, and said, ³Turn again unto the Lord, and He will turn to the remnant, that are escaped out of the hand of the king of Assyria. Enter into His sanctuary and serve the Lord. ⁴And there assembled at Jerusalem much people, and they took away the altars, and cast them into the brook Kidron, and observed the passover. And there was great joy at Jerusalem. ⁵And Hezekiah clave to the Lord — he departed not from Him; and the Lord was with him, whithersoever he went forth he prospered.

But Hezekiah was sick unto death. ⁶And Isaiah the prophet came to him and said, Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die. Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, O Lord, remember now, how I have walked before Thee in truth. And Hezekiah wept sore. And afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle of the city, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, Turn again, and say to Hezekiah, ⁷Thus saith the Lord, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears. Behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord; and I will add unto thy days fifteen years. Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me? And Isaiah said, Shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go

back ten steps? Hezekiah answered, ⁶It is a light thing for the shadow to decline ten steps: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten steps. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord, and he brought the shadow ten steps backward, by which it gone down on the dial of Ahaz.

At that time Merodach, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. ⁹And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed him all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and all that was found in his treasures. There was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, they are come from a far country, even from Babylon. And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. ¹⁰And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord: Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house shall be carried to Babylon. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, shall be chamberlains in the palace of the king of Babylon.

¹ What is written of Hezekiah the king of Judah?

² How did he prove his piety?

³ What message did his runners cry out through the land?

⁴ What was the result?

⁵ What else is reported of Hezekiah?

⁶ What was Isaiah's message to him when he was sick unto death?

⁷ What happened after Hezekiah had prayed earnestly and wept?

⁸ What sign had he from the Lord?

⁹ How did Hezekiah receive the ambassadors of the king of Babylon?

¹⁰ What punishment was announced to him for his vanity?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Thank God, not all people are godless. Yet you may find ten wicked people before you meet even one pious person. It is said very rarely of the ancient kings, He did what was pleasing in the sight of the Lord.

2. "Is any among you suffering, let him pray; and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." (James 5: 13, 55.)

3. "Most men will proclaim everyone his own kindness: but a faithful man who can find him?" (Prov. 20: 6.) It would have been

better for Hezekiah to have passed away when he was sick, before his vanity and ambition had led him to make a display of his treasures before the Gentiles.

Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
With me exalt His name;
When in distress to Him I called,
He to my rescue came.

70. JOSIAH AND JEREMIAH.

2 Kings 22-24.

¹In the days of Josiah the king of Judah, when they repaired the breaches of the house of the Lord, the book of the law was found in the house of the Lord. And it was brought and read before the king. ²And when the king heard the words of the book of the law (Deut. 28), he rent his clothes and said, Great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book. And the word of the Lord came unto him through Huldah the prophetess, who said unto him, ³Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, because they have forsaken me; but because thou didst humble thyself before the Lord, thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And the king went up to the house of the Lord, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord. And all the people stood to the covenant. ⁴And the king commanded the priests to bring forth out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal. He also brake the altar at Bethel (58) and burned bones of the sepulchres on it. ⁵The like unto him there was no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses.

Jeremiah the prophet stood in the gate of the house of the Lord, and proclaimed, ⁶Thus saith the Lord, amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. A stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their

coming, but my people know not the ordinance of the Lord. I will scatter them also among the nations of the earth, because of their sins, and I will cause them to fall by the sword and famine; and their carcasses will be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. When Pashur the chief officer in the house of the Lord heard these words of the Lord prophesied, he smote Jeremiah the prophet and cast him into prison.

⁸After the death of Josiah came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, against Jerusalem, and took away all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and carried away all Jerusalem, all the princes, all the mighty and ten thousand, captives, and made Zedekiah king in Jehoiakim's stead. He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; and he rebelled. Then the king of Babylon came up with all his army against Jerusalem. ⁹And the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, Go and tell Zedekiah, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire: and thou shalt not escape, but shalt be delivered into his hand, and shalt go to Babylon.

Then the princes said unto the king, Let this man we pray thee be put to death: forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of the men of war. ¹⁰Then they took Jeremiah and cast him into a dungeon, in which there was no water, but mire. And Jeremiah sunk in the mire. Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a chamberlain of the king, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon, he said, ¹¹My lord the king, these men have done evil to Jeremiah, that they have cast him into the dungeon where he will die for hunger: for there is no more bread in the city. ¹²Then the king commanded the Ethiopian, saying, Take thirty men, and take up Jeremiah out of the dungeon, before he die. So the Ethiopian took thence old cast off clouts and old worn out rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon, and said unto Jeremiah, Put these clouts under thine armholes under the cords. And they drew up Jeremiah with the cords, out of the dungeon; and he remained in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken.

¹ What happened in the time of Josiah the king of Judah?

² What did the king do when the book of the law was read?

³ What did Huldah the prophetess prophesy?

- ⁴What did the king command the priests?
- ⁵What do the Scriptures testify of Josiah?
- ⁶What did Jeremiah the prophet proclaim to the people?
- ⁷What happened to Jeremiah then?
- ⁸What took place after the death of Josiah?
- ⁹What was the Lord's command to Jeremiah?
- ¹⁰How was he mistreated on account of it?
- ¹¹What did Ebed-melech the Ethiopian say to the king?
- ¹²How was Jeremiah drawn out of the dungeon?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It is a bad sign, if houses of worship decay and God's Book is lost. The condition of our churches and the value we place on the word of God indicate the measure of our piety.

2. God has at all times raised up men to punish the sins of His people when they went astray, and to raise up again the foundation of faith; Josiah was a reformer of the Church in the full sense of the word.

3. Rebuke the world, and it will revile and misuse you. No matter how well meaning a servant of God may be, his faithfulness and love of the truth only awakens hatred and bitterness with the godless.

Lord, in this Thy mercy's day
 Ere from us it pass away,
 On our knees we fall and pray.
 Judge and Saviour of our race,
 When we see Thee face to face,
 Grant us 'neath Thy wings a place.

71. THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

2 Kings 25; 1-25.

¹Nebuchadnezzar came again with all his army against Jerusalem, and besieged it, and built forth round about it. And the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people. Then a breach was made in the city; and all the men of war fled by night. And the king fled also. ²But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army was scattered from him, then they took the king and brought him up unto the king of Babylon; and they gave judgment on him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out his eyes, and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon. ³And he burnt the temple, and the king's house, and all the houses of

Jerusalem. And all the army of the Chaldeans brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. And the residue of the people that were left in the city, was carried away. But the poorest of the land were left to be vinedressers and husbandmen. ⁴And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord, and the brazen sea, did the Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried the brass to Babylon; also the golden and silver pans and basons. The brass of all these vessels was without weight. ⁵And they took Seraiah the chief priest, and other priests, and five men of them that were in the king's presence, and the scribe, and the captain which mustered the people of the land, and three score men of the people that were found in the city, and brought them to the king of Babylon. And the king of Babylon put them to death.—So Judah was carried away out of his land.

As for the people that were left in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had left, over them he placed Gedaliah. ⁶And the king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzar-adan the captain, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee. So Nebuzar-adan sent and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and said unto him, ⁷The Lord thy God hath brought this evil upon this place, as He had said, because ye have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed His voice. And now, behold, I loose thee from the chains which are upon thine hand. If it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, behold, all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good unto thee to go, thither go. So the captain gave him victuals and a present, and let him go. ⁸Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah to Mizpah, and dwelt among the people that were left in the land.

And Jeremiah wept and lamented: ⁹How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests do sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she herself is in bitterness; for the Lord had afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions. Hear all ye nations and behold my sorrow, because the young children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city. They say to their mothers, Where is corn? when their soul is poured out into their mothers' bosom. Woe unto us! for we have sinned. ¹⁰But Thou, O Lord, abide

eth forever; Thy throne is from generation to generation; wherefore dost Thou forget us forever? Turn Thou us unto Thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.

- ¹ What took place when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem again?
- ² What was the fate of the fleeing king?
- ³ What fate befell the temple and the city?
- ⁴ What booty did the Chaldeans take with them?
- ⁵ What was done with the priests and the officers of Zedekiah?
- ⁶ What was Nebuchadnezzar's command to his captain in regard to Jeremiah?
- ⁷ What did the captain say unto him?
- ⁸ Where did the prophet go after he had been set free?
- ⁹ How did the prophet lament?
- ¹⁰ What was his prayer?

APPLICATIONS.

1. One must be true even to his enemies, if the favor of God and man is not to be lost. Nebuchadnezzar had made Zedekiah king (2 Kings 24: 17), but he broke their covenant and revolted.

2. The word of the Lord is right, and all His work is done in faithfulness (Ps. 33: 4). The prophecy of Isaiah and his declaration to Hezekiah was fulfilled literally. (Isa. 35: 9. ss.)

3. No one feels it more keenly when God punishes an obstinate people, than those who have given warning and whose warning was not heeded.

4. It is a thousand times better to confess one's sins and voluntarily to humble oneself before God, than to be humbled by Him. Judah would not have suffered so severely if he had confessed his iniquity and submitted to Nebuchadnezzar, as Jeremiah had so earnestly desired.

Jesus, my Lord, I look to Thee:
Where else can helpless sinners go?
Thy boundless love shall set me free
From all my wretchedness and woe.

72. EZEKIEL AMONG THE CAPTIVES.

Ezekiel 1-48.

¹When Jerusalem after its last siege, had been made a heap of ruins by the king of Babylon, there were already for eighteen years many captives in Babylon, where, according to the word of God they were to remain seventy years. ²The captives were permitted to settle here; they had houses and gar-

dens and fared very well. ³But they longed, oh, so deeply, for the land of their fathers and tearfully remembered the temple of the Lord, and sang many a song of lamentation. They sang.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down,
Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.
Upon the willows in the midst thereof we hanged up our harps.
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her
cunning (Ps. 137).

And the Lord, their God, raised up prophets for them. ⁴Thus arose Ezekiel, a captive, the son of a priest, when Jerusalem was not yet destroyed, and proclaimed the impending end of Jerusalem; ⁵for many were dreaming of an early return to their native land. They would not submit to the word of the Lord, according to which they were to remain in Babylon for seventy years. And the Lord said unto Ezekiel, ⁶I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation; they are impudent and stiffhearted. Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, yet shall they know that there hath been a prophet among them. ⁷And thou, son of man, take thee a tile, and portray upon it the city of Jerusalem: and lay a siege against it and build forts against it, and cast up a mount against it, and plant battering rams against it round about. And take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city, and shalt lay siege against it and prophesy against Jerusalem that is besieged. Thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord, ⁸An end is come, the end is come: it awaketh against thee; behold it is come. An evil, an only evil behold it cometh. The day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains of Jerusalem. Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways; and ye shall know, that I the Lord do smite. Behold the day, behold, it cometh: the morning is gone forth. Make the chain, for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city full of violence.

And the word of the Lord came unto Ezekiel saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this selfsame day: the king of Babylon drew close unto Jerusalem this selfsame day. And the hand of the Lord hath been upon Ezekiel in the evening to the morning; and his mouth was opened, that he was no more dumb. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, They shall know that I am the Lord, when I have

made the land a desolation. ⁹Thy people are talking against thee, and speak one to another, Come and hear what is the word that cometh from the Lord; and they sit before thee and hear thy words, but do them not: for they make jests, but their hearts goeth after their gain. And, lo, thou art unto them as a song. ¹⁰But when this cometh, (behold it cometh) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them. ¹¹And on that day came one that had escaped out of Jerusalem saying, The city is smitten.

¹How long a time were the first captives in Babylon, when Jerusalem was destroyed? (Compare 2 Kings 24: 14 ss.)

²How did they fare in Babylon?

³Yet what was their longing?

⁴Which prophet arose among them?

⁵What were many of the captives thinking?

⁶What did the Lord say unto Ezekiel?

⁷How did he symbolize the siege of Jerusalem?

⁸How did he describe its coming destruction?

⁹How did the people treat the prophet?

¹⁰Yet what were they to know?

¹¹What news was brought the selfsame day?

APPLICATIONS.

1. We often fail to appreciate things we possess; but if we lose them, we long for them as did the captive Jews for their temple, to behold the beauty of the Lord (Ps. 27: 4).

2. A faithful servant of God cannot and dare not cease to testify of God and His word, though men make jests of him and mock him in their songs. They shall know that a prophet hath been among them and shall have no excuse.

How oft, alas, this wretched heart has wandered from the Lord!
 How oft my roving thoughts depart forgetful of His word! —
 Thy pardoning love, so free, so sweet, dear Saviour, I adore;
 Oh! keep me at thy sacred feet and let me rove no more.

73. DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS.

Dan. 1.

¹King Nebuchadnezzar commanded that youths of the children of Israel be brought who were well favored, wise, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and able to stand in the king's palace. ²The king appointed for them

a daily portion of his meat, and of the wine which he drank: that they should be nourished three years and thereafter stand before the king. ³Among these were Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. ⁴But Daniel purposed, that he would not defile himself with the kings' meat, and requested of the chief of the chamberlains that he might not defile himself. Now God made Daniel to find favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the chamberlains. And he said unto Daniel, ⁵I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drinks: for should he see your faces worse liking than the youths which are of your own age, then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

Then said Daniel, ⁶Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat and water to drink: and as thou seest, deal with thy servant. So he hearkened unto them, and proved them ten days. ⁷And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and they were fatter in flesh than all the youths which did eat of the king's meat. ⁸And God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. And at the end of the days, the chief of the chamberlains brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ⁹And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Shadrach Meschach and Abed-nego; therefore stood they before the king. ¹⁰And in every matter of wisdom and understanding, concerning which the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in his realm.

¹ Who of the youths of Israel were chosen at the command of Nebuchadnezzar?

² How and for what purpose were they to be educated?

³ Who received especial mention?

⁴ What had Daniel purposed?

⁵ What fears did the chief of the chamberlains express?

⁶ What was Daniel's reply?

⁷ How did the youths appear after the ten days?

⁸ What especial gifts did God give them?

⁹ What was their reputation?

¹⁰ How did the king find them?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Gold remains gold, even when trod into the dust. Pious and gifted young people are sought and esteemed in our days as well.

2. It is always a fine honor for pious people to remain true to their religious convictions. Daniel and his friends desired even in a strange land to do nothing against the precepts of their religion.

3. The opinion that an exact observance of religious duties will result in temporal losses, is indeed scattered widely; yet it is erroneous. Observe Daniel and his friends.

May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfill,
To do on earth our Father's will,
As angels do above.

74. DANIEL INTERPRETS NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

Dan. 2.

King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and his spirit was troubled and his sleep brake from him. Then the king commanded to call the magicians and wise men; and he said unto them, ¹I have dreamed a dream and my spirit is troubled to know the dream. ²Then answered they the king and said, There is not a man upon the earth, that can shew the king's matter. ³Then the king was very angry, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. And they sought Daniel and his companions to be slain. ⁴Then Daniel desired of the king that he would appoint him a time, and he would shew the king the interpretation. ⁵Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to his three companions, that they would desire mercies of God concerning this secret, that they would not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. ⁶Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding; He revealeth the secret things; He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth in Him. And Daniel went in and said, God in heaven revealeth secrets; He hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. ⁷This was thy dream and thy vision. Thou, O king, sawest and behold a great image whose aspect was terrible. As for this image, his head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his body and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron,

his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay and brake them in pieces. And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

This is the interpretation thereof. ⁸Thou, O king, art the head of gold. After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee. Thereafter the third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. The fourth shall be strong as iron; it shall at last be a divided kingdom, and partly strong and partly broken. ⁹*And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.* ¹⁰Then Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and said, Of a truth, your God is the God of gods, and a revealer of secrets. ¹¹Then the king made Daniel great, and made him to rule over the whole province of Babylon, and to be chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon. ¹²And Daniel requested of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego over the province of Babylon: but Daniel was in the gate of the king.

¹ What did Nebuchadnezzar say to the wise men of his country?

² What was their reply?

³ What did the king command in his anger?

⁴ What did Daniel request of him?

⁵ What did Daniel do then?

⁶ What happened after their prayer?

⁷ How did Daniel relate the king's dream to him?

⁸ How did he interpret the dream?

⁹ Which of the kingdoms was declared to be the most mighty?

¹⁰ What did Nebuchadnezzar do now?

¹¹ How did he reward Daniel?

¹² What did Daniel do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Not all dreams are idle. God has at all times spoken to men by dreams and visions, now to arouse them, now to instruct and comfort them.

2. It is the greatest wrong to require of men what God alone can do. Such Nebuchadnezzars may be found today, and even in the church of God.

3. Our God is a wonderful God. He revealed centuries before,

and even to a pagan king, the kingdom of Christ, its coming, power and glory. (Comp. Isa. 9: 6, 7.)

4. He who has received uncommon gifts from God and ascribes all glory to Him in all things, is a humble and grateful person (1 Cor. 15: 10).

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

75. THE THREE MEN IN THE BURNING FIERY FURNACE.

Dan. 3.

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was three score cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits; and ¹whoso fell not down and worshiped before it, was to be cast the same hour into a burning fiery furnace. At that time certain men came near, and accused the Jews, saying, ²Thou, O king, hast made a decree that every man shall worship the golden image. Now there are certain Jews, Shadrach, Meschach, and Abed-nego; they have not regarded thee: they worship not the golden image. ³Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; and he said, If ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into a burning fiery furnace. Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? They answered, ⁴Our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us. But if He will not, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image. ⁵Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated, and to bind them and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their mantles, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the burning fiery furnace. And the furnace was so exceeding hot, that the flame of the fire slew those men that were to burn them.

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king said unto his counsellors, ⁶Did we not cast three men bound into the furnace? Lo, I see four men loose walking in the fire, and they have no hurt, and the aspect of the fourth is like a son of the gods. Then Nebu-

chadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and said, 'Ye servants of the most high God, come forth and come hither. 'Then they came forth out of the fire; and the fire had no power upon the bodies of these men, nor was an hair singed, neither were their mantles changed, nor had the smell of fire passed on them. Then Nebuchadnezzar said, 'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him.

- ¹ What was Nebuchadnezzar's command in respect to his image?
- ² What complaint was brought before the king?
- ³ What did the king say to the accused?
- ⁴ What was their reply?
- ⁵ What did the king command then?
- ⁶ What did he say afterward to his counsellors?
- ⁷ How did he address the men in the furnace?
- ⁸ What was their condition when they came forth?
- ⁹ What did the king say now?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Do not worship the golden idols of the world, let them be ever so high and ever so wide; for whoever conceives or has something else instead of the one true God, on which to place his trust, commits idolatry.

2. The hatred of foreigners has produced much harm. Because these three Jewish youths were foreigners and had achieved great honors, their grudgers try to overthrow them and misused their religious convictions for this purpose.

3. The believers have a God who works wonders and says unto them, "When thou walkest through fire, thou shalt not be burned." (Isa. 43: 2.)

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee: I only design
Thy dress to consume, and thy gold to refine.

76. THE FALL OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

Dan. 4.

¹Nebuchadnezzar the king had a dream, but all the wise men of Babylon could not interpret it, until Daniel came. And the king said, ²I saw and behold a tree in the midst of the

earth, which was very high, and large, and thick; the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the branches thereof. ³And, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; he cried, Hew down the tree, and cut of his branches, shake off his leaves: let all the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches. Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass in the grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth. Let his heart be changed from a man's and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. ⁴This is by the decree of the watchers, that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and He giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men.

⁵Then Daniel answered and said, It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong; thy dominion reacheth to the end of the earth. Thou shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen, and shalt be wet with the dew of heaven, ⁶till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. ⁷Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; and He will have patience with thy sins.

All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. ⁸At the end of twelve months he was walking in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon; and he spake, and said, Is not this the great Babylon, which I have built by the might of my power, and for the glory of my majesty? ⁹While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, The kingdom is departed from thee. ¹⁰The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hair was grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. ¹¹At the end of the days Nebuchad-

nezzar lifted up his eyes unto heaven, and his understanding returned unto him, and he blessed the most High. And his counsellors and his lords sought him, and established him in his kingdom, and majesty was added unto him. Wherefore Nebuchadnezzar extolled the King of heaven and said, ¹²All his works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.

¹ Who interpreted the king's second dream?

² How did he relate his dream to Daniel?

³ What did the holy watcher cry out?

⁴ Why was this decreed in the counsel of the watchers?

⁵ How did Daniel interpret the king's dream?

⁶ Why was Nebuchadnezzar to be abased so deeply?

⁷ What did Daniel advise?

⁸ When was the dream fulfilled?

⁹ What followed upon his bragging?

¹⁰ Into what condition did he sink?

¹¹ What happened thereafter?

¹² What does he now confess of God?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Rich and mighty people are not always the happiest; they are frequently put into great disquiet by distressing dreams.

2. Though vain people spread themselves like large, thick trees whose height reaches the heavens, yet they can never thrust God from His throne, but He can humble them.

Be Thou, O God, exalted high;
And as Thy glory fills the sky,
So let it be on earth displayed,
Till Thou art here and there obeyed.

77. KING BELSHAZZAR AND THE REDUCTION OF BABYLON.

Dan. 5.

After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar was king in Babylon. ¹He made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before them. ²Whiles he tasted the wine, he commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem; that the king, and his lords, and his wives might drink therein. And as they drank therein, they praised the gods of

gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. ³In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace. And the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, and his knees smote one against another. And the king cried with might to bring in the wise men, and the soothsayers; but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation. ⁴Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were perplexed. Then the queen said, ⁵There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, namely Daniel. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.

Then was Daniel brought in before the king. ⁶And Daniel spoke before the king. O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father the kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and majesty: and because of the greatness that He gave him, all the peoples feared him. But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses, and ate grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven:—until he knew that the most high God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that He setteth up over it whomsoever He will. ⁷And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, and thy wives have drunk in them. Then was this hand sent before Him, and this writing was inscribed. ⁸And this is the writing that was inscribed, *Mene, Mene*, that is: God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end. *Tekel*, Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. *Peres*: Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. ⁹In that night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain, for in that night the army of the Medes and Persians took the city, and the king and all his princes were murdered. ¹⁰And Cyrus became king of Babylon, and Daniel had great power under him.

¹ What did Belshazzar, the successor of Nebuchadnezzar, do?

- ² How did he sin still more?
- ³ What happened in that same hour?
- ⁴ How did it affect the king?
- ⁵ What did the queen say to him?
- ⁶ What did Daniel say when he was brought in before the king?
- ⁷ Of what did Daniel accuse him?
- ⁸ What was the writing inscribed on the wall?
- ⁹ What took place in that night?
- ¹⁰ Who became king in Belshazzar's place?

APPLICATIONS.

1. No matter how highly lifeless idols may be praised, they will be of no avail when distress and troubles come. (Ps. 115: 3-8.)
2. The rejoicing of the godless lasts only a short time. A mere hand—a shadow on the wall—may change it to mourning.
3. He who fails to watch, and yields to sensuality, will become a prey of his enemy. "When they are saying, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thess. 5: 3).

God eternal, Lord of all!
 Lowly at Thy feet we fall:
 All the world doth worship Thee;
 We amidst the throng would be;
 All the holy angels cry,
 Hail, thrice holy, God most high!
 Lord of all the heavenly pow'rs,
 Be the same loud anthem ours.

78. THE RETURN OUT OF CAPTIVITY.

Ezra 1-6.

¹In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished (25: 11 ss.), the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, ²All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord, the God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem. Whosoever there is among you of all His people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, and build the house of the Lord, the God of Israel. And whosoever is left in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God in Jerusalem.

³Then rose up the heads of father's houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites, even all whose spirit God had stirred, to go up to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. ⁴And all they that were round about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things.

⁵Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, thirty bowls of gold, silver bowls of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. ⁶The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and three score, beside their menservants, and their maidservants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and they had two hundred singing men and singing women, seven hundred thirty and six horses, two hundred forty and five mules, four hundred thirty and five camels, and six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.

And when they came to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, they offered willingly for the house of God to set it up in its place; and they gave after their ability into the treasury of the work. ⁷They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea unto Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia. ⁸In the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, began Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and the priests, and appointed the Levites from twenty years and upward, to have the oversight of the work of the house of the Lord. ⁹And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests with trumpets, and the Levites with cymbals, to praise the Lord. And they sang one to another in praising, and giving thanks unto the Lord, because He is good, and His mercy endureth forever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. ¹⁰But many of the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid

before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people.

- ¹ What prophecy was fulfilled through Cyrus?
- ² What was the proclamation of King Cyrus?
- ³ Who went first to Jerusalem?
- ⁴ How were they supported by their neighbors?
- ⁵ What did Cyrus give them?
- ⁶ How many went up together?
- ⁷ What did they do to advance the building of the temple?
- ⁸ What was done in the second year after their arrival?
- ⁹ What took place when the foundation was laid?
- ¹⁰ How were their different feelings expressed?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Many a one who is stirred up fails to do what God demands of him; Cyrus, however, did, when the Lord had stirred him up, and for this reason he is called a servant of the Lord.

2. Robbed and stolen goods should be returned; Cyrus did so, though he was a pagan; yet many a one who is not a pagan fails to do so.

3. Who would not weep, if, after many years, he returned to his former place of worship and found it in ruins?

Jerusalem God's dwelling place!
 I love and long to see;
 Oh, that my sorrows had an end,
 That I might dwell in thee.

79. QUEEN ESTHER.

¹King Ahasuerus of Persia made a feast unto all his princes and unto all the people, and commanded to bring Vashti the queen to shew her beauty. But the queen refused to come. Therefore the king was very wroth, and commanded, that Vashti come no more before the king. There was a certain Jew whose name was Mordecai, and he brought up Esther who was a maiden fair and beautiful. ²And king Ahasuerus loved Esther and made her queen. And Esther shewed not her kindred nor people, as Mordecai had charged her. After these things did Ahasuerus promote Haman, and all the king's servants bowed down and revered Haman; but Mordecai did not reverence him. ³And Haman was full of wrath

and sought to destroy all the Jews. And the king said, Do as it seemeth good to thee. ⁴And letters were sent by posts into all the provinces to destroy all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day.

And in every province there was great mourning among the Jews. ⁵And Mordecai sent unto queen Esther and charged her that she should go in unto the king. Then Esther gave a message to Mordecai, ⁶that whosoever shall come unto the king, who is not called, must die. Then Mordecai returned answer unto Esther, Think not that thou shalt escape; who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther returned this answer, ⁷Fast ye for me three days and three nights, and I will go in unto the king. If I perish, I perish. On the third day Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the court of the king's house. ⁸When the king saw Esther standing, she obtained favor. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. Then said the king, ⁹What is thy request? it shall be given thee even to the half of the kingdom. Esther said, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared. Now when the king and Haman came to the banquet, the king said, What is thy petition, Esther? it shall be granted thee. Then answered Esther, ¹⁰If I have found favor, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them. Then went Haman forth glad of heart, and said, ¹¹The queen did let no man come but myself, and tomorrow also am I invited by her together with the king. Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate. ¹²Then said his wife and his friends, Let a gallows be made, and in the morning speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused a gallows to be made.

¹³On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the chronicles. And it was found, that Mordecai had told of two chamberlains, who had sought to lay hands on the king. And the king said, What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then they answered, There is nothing done for him. And when Haman came, the king said, ¹⁴What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor? Now Haman thought, To whom would the king delight to honor more than to myself? ¹⁵And Haman

said, Let the man be arrayed with royal apparel and a crown royal set upon his head, and cause him to ride on the horse that the king rideth upon, and bring him through the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor. ¹⁶Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and do even so to Mordecai. Haman did so, and then hasted to his house mourning. But the chamberlains came, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

When the king came with Haman to the banquet, he said unto Esther, What is thy petition, that it be given thee? Then Esther said, ¹⁷Let my life be given me, and my people. For we are sold, to be destroyed. Then said the king. Where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, ¹⁸The adversary is this wicked Haman. ¹⁹And the king arose in his wrath. Then one of the chamberlains said, Behold also the gallows fifty cubits high, which he hath made for Mordecai, standeth in the house of Haman. And the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows. And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai, and said, Write ye also to the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring. ²⁰And posts on horseback, and on mules rode swiftly according to the command of the king, to the Jews and the governors in all the provinces, from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred and twenty and seven provinces; in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have rule over them, it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them. And Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went forth throughout all the provinces.

¹ Why was Queen Vashti rejected?

² Whom did Ahasuerus then make queen?

³ What had Haman planned to do, because Mordecai would not reverence him?

⁴ What command had he issued with the consent of the king?

⁵ What was Mordecai's request of Esther?

⁶ What answer did he receive?

⁷ What did Esther say when Mordecai sent word to her again?

⁸ How did the king receive her?

⁹ What did the king say to her?

¹⁰ What was Esther's reply the second time?

¹¹ What were Haman's remarks to his friends?

¹² What was their advice?

- ¹³ What happened the same night?
¹⁴ What did the king say to Haman?
¹⁵ What was Haman's reply?
¹⁶ What did the king command him to do?
¹⁷ What was Esther's request of the king in the presence of Haman?
¹⁸ Whom did Esther name as her adversary, upon the king's inquiry?
¹⁹ What was done with Haman?
²⁰ How did the Jews fare thereafter?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The same Lord humbles one person and elevates another. We see this plainly in Vashti and Esther, as well as in Haman and Mordecai. (Luke 1: 52.)

2. We ought to be ready to sacrifice our lives for our brethren. Who knows whether you will not succeed in saving some, if you dare to do like Esther?

In each event of life, how clear
Thy ruling hand I see!
Each blessing to my soul more dear
Because conferred by Thee.
In every joy that crowns my days,
In every pain I bear,
My heart shall find delight in praise,
Or seek relief in prayer.

80. EZRA.

Ezra 7-10.

Ezra was a ready scribe. And there went up with him some of the children of Israel unto Jerusalem. Now this is a copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes (Xerxes) gave unto Ezra the priest and scribe: ¹"I make a decree that the children of Israel in my realm, which are minded of their own free will to go to Jerusalem, go with thee, and to carry the silver and gold which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem. ²Take all this that thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem. And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the

money, that do ye after the will of your God. ³And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, bestow it out of the king's treasure house. ⁴And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, appoint magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people, all such as know the laws of thy God, and teach ye them that know them not."

And Ezra relates, I was strengthened according to the hand of the Lord my God upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me. ⁵Then I proclaimed a fast, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek of Him a straight way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to ask of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way, ⁶because we had said unto the king, The hand of our God is upon all them that seek Him, for good. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us. ⁷And the hand of our God was upon us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and the lier in wait by the way. And we came to Jerusalem, and weighed the silver and the gold and the vessels in the house of our God, and offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, and delivered the king's commission unto the governors.

⁸And the princes drew near to me, saying, The people of Israel have not separated themselves from the heathen, for they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons. When I heard this thing, I rent my garment, and sat down astonied. Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of God; and I sat astonied until the evening sacrifice. And at the evening sacrifice I rose up from my humiliation, and fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God, and I said, ⁹O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God; our guiltiness is grown up unto the heavens. For our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests been delivered to the sword and to captivity. Wouldst Thou be angry with us till Thou hadst consumed us?

Now while Ezra prayed and wept before the house of God, all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto him unto Jerusalem, and all the people sat in the broad place before the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain. And Ezra stood up and said

unto them, ¹⁰Ye have trespassed, and have married strange women, to increase the guilt of Israel. Now therefore make confession unto the Lord, and do His pleasure: and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the strange women. ¹¹Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.

¹ What are the contents of the letter which Ezra received from the king?

² What was Ezra to do with the presents?

³ What else had the king promised him?

⁴ How was he to establish order?

⁵ Why did he proclaim a fast?

⁶ Why was he unwilling to ask for an escort from the king?

⁷ How did he fare on the way?

⁸ What did the princes say to Ezra when he arrived?

⁹ How did Ezra pray to the Lord?

¹⁰ What did he say to the assembled congregation?

¹¹ What was the congregation's answer?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The example of a heathen king who contributed such large sums for the building of the temple, puts to shame many Christians who contribute so little for the erection of their houses of worship, and who forget that God requires that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be maintained.

2. How carefully Ezra tried to defend the honor of his God! Because he had told the king, "The hand of our God is upon all them that seek Him," he was ashamed to ask for a band of soldiers and horsemen and to put his trust in men.

My Father's house on high! Home of my soul, how near,
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye Thy golden gates appear.
Ah! then my spirit faints to reach the land I love,
The bright inheritance of saints, Jerusalem above.

81. NEHEMIAH.

¹Nehemiah, one of the captives of the people of Israel was the butler of Artaxerxes the king, and he was in Shushan the palace. Hanani and certain men out of Judah came to him. And Nehemiah asked them concerning Jerusalem. And they said, ²The Jews there are in great affliction: the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. ³When he heard these words, he sat down and wept, and

mourned two days, and fasted, and prayed before God, and said, O Lord the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him, and keep His commandments, hearken unto the prayer of Thy servant, which I pray before Thee at this time, day and night, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against Thee: yea I and my fathers' house have sinned. Remember, I beseech Thee the word that Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses, If ye return unto me, though your outcasts were in the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen.

And Nehemiah stood before Artaxerxes the king, and was sad in his presence. And the king said unto him, Why is thy countenance sad? Then Nehemiah was sore afraid and he said unto the king. 'Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad? The city of my fathers lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire. Then the king said, For what dost thou make request? And Nehemiah said, 'If it please the king, that thou wouldst send me unto the city of my fathers, that I may rebuild it? And the king granted him, and sent with him captains of the army and horsemen.

⁶And when Nehemiah came to Jerusalem, and was there three days, he arose in the night, and some few men with him; neither told he any what God put into his heart to do for Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with him, save the one he rode upon. And he went out by night by the valley gate and went on to the fountain gate, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under him to pass. Then he went up in the night by the brook, and he was sad to see the wall so broken and the gates thereof burned with fire; and he returned by the valley gate. And he said unto the rulers, 'Ye see how the city lieth waste: come let us build up its walls. And they did so.

⁷But when the adversaries of Jerusalem heard it. they laughed them to scorn and said, What is this thing that ye do? Will ye rebel against the king? And they came and fought against Jerusalem. ⁸But those of Jerusalem prayed unto God, and set a watch day and night. And it came to pass, that half of the servants wrought in the work, and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows. Every one that builded the

wall with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other held his weapon. And the builders had their swords girded on their loins, and he that sounded the trumpet was by Nehemiah. ¹⁰And Nehemiah said, We are separated upon the wall, one far from another; in what place soever ye hear the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us. Our God shall fight for us; thus will we labor in the work. ¹¹And half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared. And neither Nehemiah, nor his servants put off their clothes. Nor did Nehemiah demand the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon the people.

¹²And when the seventh month was come, all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the broad place, and Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both men and women, and all that understood in hearing, and read therein from early morning until midday. ¹³And all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁴But Nehemiah and Ezra stilled the people, saying, This day is holy unto the Lord; mourn not, nor weep; for the joy of the Lord is your strength. ¹⁵And all the people made a covenant to walk in God's law.

¹ Who was Nehemiah?

² What report did some men bring from Jerusalem?

³ What did he do when he heard the report?

⁴ What was Nehemiah's reply, when the king inquired why he was so sad?

⁵ What did he request of the king?

⁶ In what condition was Jerusalem?

⁷ What did he say to the rulers of the city?

⁸ What did their adversaries, the Samaritans, do?

⁹ How was the building of the wall continued?

¹⁰ What precaution did Nehemiah take?

¹¹ Under what difficulties and want did all work?

¹² What took place in the seventh month?

¹³ What impression did the reading of the law make upon the people?

¹⁴ What did Nehemiah and Ezra do now?

¹⁵ And what did the people do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. There is a supernatural power in true faith; it makes men heroic and ready and willing for every sacrifice. This may be observed in Nehemiah.

2. The builders of the spiritual Jerusalem, the Church of God,

also must battle with adversaries, and be circumspect; they, too, must, therefore, use the sword and the trowel, doctrine and defense, at the same time.

3. Too much sadness weakens the spirit and works discouragement; on the other hand, rejoicing in the Lord is our strength. But he is not strong who is not steadfast in distress. (Prov. 24: 10.)

Thou on the Lord rely, so safe thou shalt go on:
Fix on His word thy steadfast eye, so shall thy work be done.
No profit canst thou gain by self-consuming care:
To Him commend thy cause: His ear attends the softest prayer.

NEW TESTAMENT STORIES.

I. BEHOLD, I COME.

Heb. 1-11.

The Lord our God from the beginning cared faithfully for the children of men. ¹For in the earliest times, when Adam and Eve had forsaken their God and had to be driven from Paradise, they received from the Lord, who is merciful, and gracious, and abundant in goodness, a great promise, in which the glad tidings were proclaimed, that at some time, another Son of Man should come to lead them and their descendants into the true Paradise. God had said unto the serpent that had beguiled Adam and Eve, ²And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel. (3)

³This word was for the first men and their descendants, a glad tidings, a gospel; it was dear and precious to them, and they spake of it to their children and children's children. And when in the flood, God the Lord destroyed man from the face of the earth, because of their godlessness, and would not hear the voice of God, Noah, who alone with his family had been saved, preserved the word of promise. ⁴He proclaimed it to his sons and said, that the Son of Man, whom God had ordained for the salvation of man, was to come from the family of Shem: for this was implied in his words, when he spoke to his children in the name of God, Blessed be the God of Shem! (6.)

And when Noah's descendants had taken possession of the earth far and wide, they very soon began to forget the Lord their God; and it almost seemed that no true servant of God should be left. Then the Lord our God was merciful and chose Abraham, a descendant of Shem; saved him from destruction and revealed His will unto him, as to himself and his descendants, for the salvation of the whole world, and said, ⁵Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make

thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (7.)

⁶The same promise was given after Abraham to his son Isaac, and the venerable fathers were glad in the hope of the coming Saviour; they rejoiced that they were to see His day: and they saw, and were glad. (John 8: 56.) And when Jacob was about to depart, he gathered his twelve sons around him, and blessed each one with a special blessing; but unto Judah he said, Judah, thou art a lion's whelp: from the prey art thou gone up. ⁷The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the obedience of the people be. (23.)

All those who regarded the word of God, hoped for this Shiloh of the tribe of Judah. And again many a year passed by. Then arose Moses the servant of the Lord, who led the descendants of Abraham out of Egypt and gave them the law of God. He, too, spake at his departure of those great hopes of the children of God, and said, ⁸The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him shall ye hearken; and I will put my word into His mouth. (36.)

¹ When did God give His first promise unto man?

² What is this promise?

³ How did men always esteem this promise?

⁴ To whom did Noah communicate this word of promise?

⁵ What did God say unto Abraham?

⁶ To whom was this promise given afterward?

⁷ How did Jacob prophesy of the coming Messiah?

⁸ Repeat the prophecy of Moses.

APPLICATIONS.

1. By promising the Redeemer, God revealed His mercy; at the same time he let fallen man understand that he should not remain in sin.

2. The saints of the old covenant firmly believed the promise of the Messiah or Redeemer, and longingly awaited His coming. They knew how to comfort themselves with this hope.

See, dearest Lord, our willing souls
Accept Thine offered grace:
We bless the great Redeemer's love
And give the Father praise.

2. HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID.

At the time when a descendant of Abraham, the son of Jesse—David by name—of the tribe of Judah, was king over Israel, the Lord continued to give another great promise; for the children of man could not be reminded too often of the coming of the Saviour. David had intended to build the Lord a temple; but the Lord said, Thou shalt not build me a temple. Yet at this time David received a word of God from Nathan the prophet, saying, Thou shalt not build me a temple. But Nathan the prophet brought David the word of the Lord, saying, 'When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, and I will establish his kingdom; he shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. (51.) ²From that time on David and his holy singers sang of this coming king, who was called the son of David¹). And all the prophets that arose after that time, always spoke of the coming of this king.

Isaiah the prophet saw Him in spirit as already born, and cried out saying, ³'Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace; of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end²). And Micah the prophet saw the birthplace of the great Son of David and said, 'But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, which art little to be among the thousands in Judah, out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting³).

Jeremiah the prophet called Him, ⁵'The Lord is our righteousness⁴). ⁶Ezekiel called Him the one shepherd⁵). Daniel prophesied of His eternal kingdom⁶). Zechariah proclaimed the future entrance of the Messiah into the city of David⁷). Haggai exclaimed, Yet once, it is a little while, and called Him the desire of all nations⁸). And about four hundred years before the birth of the son of David, Malachi the last prophet said, Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me. ⁷And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, and the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in⁹). Yet what shall we say further? Our time would be

too short, if we should speak of all the many glorious prophecies of the prophets; they all cried out and still cry, ⁸Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee¹⁰).

¹) Ps. 2: 45, 72, 110.—²) Isa. 9: 6, 7, s 69.—³) Micah 5: 1, s 69.—⁴) Jer. 33: 14-16, s 71.—⁵) Eze. 34: 23 s 72.—⁶) Dan. 2: 44, s 74, 77.—⁷) Zech. 9: 9, s 78.—⁸) Hag. 2: 6, 7, s 78.—⁹) Mal. 3: 1, s 81.—¹⁰) Isa. 60: 1.

¹ What promise did God give David?

² What particular name was given to the Messiah?

³ What did Isaiah the prophet prophesy concerning Him?

⁴ What was the Messianic prophecy of Micah?

⁵ What did Jeremiah call the Messiah?

⁶ What was Ezekiel's prophecy? Daniel's? Zechariah's? Haggai's?

⁷ How does Malachi speak of His advent?

⁸ What do these and many other prophecies cry out unto us?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Although God spake at sundry times and in divers manners in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, their testimony of Christ agrees perfectly in every instance. (Acts 10: 43.)

2. If different men of different ages foretell the same thing centuries beforehand, and it occurs at the time and in the manner designated, it is hardiness to doubt its godliness. (2 Pet. 1: 19.)

Hosanna! raise the pealing hymn
To David's Son and Lord,
With cherubim and seraphim,
Exalt th' incarnate Word.

3. ZACHARIAS AND ELISABETH.

Luke 1: 5-25.

There was in the days of Herod, king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, and the name of his wife was Elisabeth. ¹They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, and they both were now well stricken in years. Now it came to pass, while he executed the priest's office before God, and it was his lot to burn incense, he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the hour of incense. ²And

there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.

But the angel said unto him, ³Fear not, Zacharias: because thy supplication is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb; and many of the children of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord their God. ⁴And he shall go before His face (the Lord's) in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him.

And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am old, and my wife is well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak unto thee, to bring thee these tidings, and ⁵behold, thou shalt be silent, and not be able to speak until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou believedst not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and they marvelled while he tarried in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them. ⁶And they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he beckoned unto them, and remained dumb. And it came to pass, when the days of his ministrations were fulfilled, he departed unto his house.

¹ What praise is given to Zacharias and Elisabeth?

² What happens while he executed the priest's office?

³ What did the angel say unto him?

⁴ How does the angel describe the office of John?

⁵ What else did the angel Gabriel say to Zacharias?

⁶ What did the people perceive, when he came out of the temple?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The angels are God's messengers to carry out His commands. But we, too, should always fulfill our office and calling willingly and faithfully, like the angels in heaven. (Ps. 103: 20.)

2. God carries out His judgment over men through angels. Such is taught by the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, as well as in

2 Sam. 24; 17; 2 Kings 6: 16, 17, and in many other instances given in the Holy Scriptures.

3. Be God-fearing and pious, if you wish angels to surround you and serve you; for they are ready to serve all seeking salvation. (Heb. 1: 14.)

Thy praises, Lord, I will resound
To all the listening nations round;
Thy mercy highest heaven transcends
Thy truth beyond the clouds extends.

4. MARY AND THE ANGEL GABRIEL.

Luke 1: 26-38.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city in Galilee, named Nazareth, ¹to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, ²Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. ³And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this might be.

And the angel said unto her, ⁴Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.

⁵Then Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be? And the angel answered and said unto her, ⁶The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God. And, behold, Elizabeth, thy kinswoman, hath also conceived a son in her old age: for with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, ⁷Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. An angel of the Lord also appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, ⁸Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins.

- ¹ To whom was the angel Gabriel sent?
- ² How did the angel greet Mary?
- ³ What impression did the sight of the angel make upon her?
- ⁴ What else did the angel say?
- ⁵ What was Mary's reply?
- ⁶ What did the angel say then?
- ⁷ How did Mary receive the angel's message?
- ⁸ What did the angel say unto Joseph in a dream?

APPLICATIONS.

1. How deeply the eternal Son of God humbled Himself, when, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, He took upon Himself flesh and blood from virgin Mary, and became in all points like us, yet without sin! (Heb. 4: 15.)

2. How highly was Mary elevated, when God chose her to become the mother of His son. But she received this honor, as well as her own salvation, of mere grace; she drank of the same fount of grace from which all of us must draw. (John 2: 5.)

3. In order to believe and to grasp more readily the immaculate conception and birth of Jesus, one needs only to remember how exactly it agrees with the prophecies. He was born of a virgin and of the family of David, as the prophets had prophesied. (Isa. 7: 14. Matt. 21: 9.)

Behold, He comes! He comes to bless
The nations as their God;
To show the world His righteousness,
And send His truth abroad.

5. MARY AND ELISABETH.

Luke 1:39-56.

¹And Mary arose in these days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah. And entered into the house of Zacharias and saluted Elisabeth. ²And it came to pass, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, she was filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake with a loud voice, and said, Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me? ³And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a fulfillment of those things which have been spoken to her from the Lord.

And Mary said, ⁴My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. ⁵For He hath looked upon the low estate of His handmaiden. Behold, from hence-

forth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name. And His mercy is unto generations and generations on them that fear Him. He hath showed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart. He hath put down the princes from their thrones, and hath exalted them of low degree. The hungry He hath filled with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away. ⁶He hath holpen Israel his servant, in remembrance of His mercy; as He spake unto our fathers, toward Abraham and his seed for ever. ⁷And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned unto her house.

- ¹ Where did Mary go after her visitation?
- ² What happened when Mary saluted Elisabeth?
- ³ What did Elisabeth say unto Mary?
- ⁴ How does Mary begin her hymn of praise?
- ⁵ Why did she praise the Lord thus?
- ⁶ How does she show her faith in God's promises?
- ⁷ What did Mary do thereafter?

APPLICATIONS.

1. After the greeting of the angel and the annunciation, Mary hastened into the hill country, unto her pious old friend, to rejoice with her over what had taken place. "Divided joy is doubled joy."

2. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Though highly favored, yet Mary remains in humility and ascribes all honor to God alone. God giveth grace to the humble.

3. If the pious Israelite rejoiced in the hope of the coming Redeemer, how much more we ought to rejoice in Him, now that He has come!

O blessed God, to Thee I raise
My voice in thankful hymns of praise;
And when my voice shall silent be,
My silence shall be praise to Thee.

6. THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Luke 1: 57-80.

Now Elisabeth's time was fulfilled that she should be delivered, and she brought forth a son. ¹And her neighbors and her kinsfolk heard that the Lord had magnified His mercy

towards her; and they rejoiced with her. ²And it came to pass on the eighth day that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him Zacharias, after the name of the father, But his mother answered and said, ³Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, ⁴There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. ⁵And they made signs to his father, what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marveled all. ⁶And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, blessing God. And a fear came on all that dwelt round about them. And all these things were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judæa. And all that heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, ⁷What then shall this child be? And the hand of the Lord was with him.

And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, ⁸Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people. And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David. As He spake aforetimes by the mouth of His holy prophets, that He remembered His holy covenant, and the oath which He sware unto Abraham our father. ⁹And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people in the remission of their sins through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high shall visit us, to shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

¹⁰And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

¹ What took place when Elizabeth gave birth to a son?

² What name did they intend to give him?

³ What did his mother say?

⁴ What was the reply of her kinsfolk?

⁵ How was the question decided?

⁶ What result followed his father's decision?

⁷ What did the people say when they observed this?

⁸ How did Zacharias, filled with the Holy Ghost, now bless God?

⁹ What did he prophesy of the child?

¹⁰ What else is reported of the child?

APPLICATIONS.

1. He who looks upon children as a gift of God which He has given us in mercy, will have joy in them, and will seek to nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6: 4.)

2. Not infrequently circumstances and events are connected with the birth of a child which force us to ask, "What then shall this child be?"—What? John became the greatest prophet of the old covenant. (Matt. 11: 11.)

3. How happy parents may consider themselves, whose children occupy a high position in God's kingdom, and who as useful instruments of the Lord lead many unto righteousness.

Our children Thou dost claim,
 O Lord, our God, as Thine;
 Ten thousand blessings to Thy name
 For goodness so divine!
 How great Thy mercies, Lord,
 How plenteous is Thy grace,
 Which, in the promise of Thy love,
 Includes our rising race!

7. THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.

Luke 2: 1-20.

Now it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, ¹that all the world should be enrolled. ²This was the first enrollment made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to enroll themselves, every one to his own city. ³And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; ⁴because he was of the house and family of David: to enroll himself with Mary who was betrothed to him, being great with child. And while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered. ⁵And she brought forth her firstborn son, and she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. ⁶And, lo, an angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, ⁷Be not afraid: behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the

people; for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ⁸And this is the sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. ⁹And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, ¹⁰Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found both Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger. ¹¹And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all that heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹²But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart. ¹³And the Shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it had been told unto them.

¹ What decree was issued by Cæsar Augustus?

² When did this enrollment take place?

³ Where did Joseph go?

⁴ Why had he to go to Bethlehem to be enrolled?

⁵ What happened there as to Mary?

⁶ What happened to the shepherds in the field?

⁷ What did the angel say unto them?

⁸ How were they to recognize the newly born Saviour of the world?

⁹ How did the angels celebrate His birth?

¹⁰ What did the shepherds say one to another?

¹¹ What did they do when they had seen the Christ-child?

¹² What did Mary do when she heard the sayings of the shepherds?

¹³ And what did the pious shepherds do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It is not without purpose that the Holy Spirit had written down carefully the time, place, and circumstances of the birth of Christ; it is a historical event that cannot be contradicted.

2. As in Christ's whole life, we find also at His birth closely allied lowliness and sublimity; things seemingly of no importance, and things wonderful; poverty and plenty, and impotence and omnipotence.

3. The light of the world breaks forth in the darkness of the night. Mankind is asleep and quiet; the angels watch and celebrate with loud rejoicing the advent of the Redeemer.

4. The great people of the world had no presage of what was

going on in Bethlehem; but God let angels communicate it to poor shepherds. Happy are they who hear the glad tidings and believe them, and tell others of them.

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumphs of the skies,
With th' angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

8. THE PRESENTATION OF JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

Luke 2: 21-40.

¹When eight days were fulfilled for circumcising Him, His name was called Jesus, which was so called by the angel before He was conceived.

And when six weeks had passed, Joseph and Mary brought the child Jesus to Jerusalem, ²to present Him to the Lord, and to offer a sacrifice according to the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. ³And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed unto him, ⁴that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple. ⁵And when the parents brought in the child Jesus, he took Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

⁶And His father and mother marveled at those things which were spoken concerning Him. ⁷And Simeon blessed them and said unto Mary His mother, Behold, this child is set for the falling and rising up of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against. And a sword shall pierce through thine own soul, that thoughts out of many hearts may

be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity, and she had been a widow even for fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, worshiping with fastings and supplications night and day. She, too, came up that very hour and gave thanks unto God, and spake of Him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. ¹⁰And when they had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. ¹¹And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.

¹ What name was given to the child at His circumcision?

² Why was the child Jesus brought into the temple in Jerusalem?

³ Who was in the temple at the same time?

⁴ What had the Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon?

⁵ What did he do and say?

⁶ What impression did this make upon Joseph and Mary?

⁷ What did Simeon say unto Mary?

⁸ What is said of Anna?

⁹ What did she do?

¹⁰ Where did the holy family go thereafter?

¹¹ What farther do we read of the child Jesus?

APPLICATIONS.

1. There is in the whole world no more beautiful and important a name than Jesus, which means Saviour or Redeemer. It is worthy to be called upon, believed and praised by all. (Acts 4: 12.)

2. The hope or the faithful maketh not ashamed. Whatever God has promised will be fulfilled; and the fulfilment of His promise brings happiness. Blessed Simeon! He believed, and was permitted to see.

3. You, too, were presented to the Lord at your baptism; therefore always consider yourself a consecrated one of the Lord; and present yourself to Him as a thank-offering.

Rejoice, ye saints, rejoice and praise
The blessings of redeeming grace!
Jesus, your everlasting tower
Stands firm against the tempest's power.

9. THE WISE MEN FROM THE EAST.

Matt. 2: 1-12.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, ¹in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ²Where is He that is born king of the Jews? For we saw His star in the East and are come to worship Him. ³And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ should be born. And they said unto him, ⁵In Bethlehem of Judæa. ⁶For thus it is written by the prophet, And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judæa, art in no wise least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come forth a Governor, which shall be ruler of my people Israel (Micah 5: 1). ⁷Then Herod privily called the wise men, and learned of them carefully what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, ⁸Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found Him, bring me word, that I also may come and worship Him.

And they, having heard the king, went their way. ⁹And, lo, the star, which they saw in the East, went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was. And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy, and came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother; ¹⁰and they fell down, and worshiped Him: and opening their treasures they offered unto Him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. ¹¹And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, ¹²they departed into their own country another way.

¹ When did the wise men from the East come to Jerusalem?

² What was their inquiry?

³ How did their question impress everybody?

⁴ What did Herod do?

⁵ What was the answer of the scribes?

⁶ How did they know that?

⁷ What else did king Herod do?

⁸ What did he say unto the wise men?

⁹ How were they guided to Bethlehem?

¹⁰ What did they do when they found the child?

¹¹ How were they warned of God in a dream?

¹² Where did they go now?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Let not the heathens put you to shame. The wise men come from a distant land, seek Jesus, inquire for Him, bring Him presents, and you?—hardly think of Him.

2. Truly the first are the last. Heathens who were not in the covenant with God and were excluded from the promises, know and believe that the Saviour is born; but the children of the covenant, and the custodians of the divine Word awake as from a dream and just begin to search the Scriptures.

3. Seek Jesus, too. He speaks through His Spirit, "Those that seek me early shall find me." Seek Him until you find Him and give Him your heart. (Prov. 23: 26.)

Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion,
Odors of Edom, and offerings divine?
Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?
Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us Thine aid;
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

10. THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT AND THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS.

Matt. 2: 13-23.

Now when the wise men were departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, and said, ¹Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I tell thee: ²for Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him. ³And he arose and took the young child and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt: ⁴and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son.

⁵Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had carefully learned of the wise men.

⁶But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and said, ⁷Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and go into the land of

Israel: for they are dead that sought the young child's life.
⁸And he arose, and took the young child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel, and dwelt in a city called Nazareth.

- ¹ What did the angel say unto Joseph in a dream?
- ² Why did he give this command?
- ³ What did Joseph do upon this?
- ⁴ How long did he remain there?
- ⁵ What did Herod do now?
- ⁶ What happened after Herod's death?
- ⁷ What did the angel say unto Joseph?
- ⁸ Where did he go now with the child and His mother?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The fatherly eye of God watched from the beginning over the holy child Jesus; and He is even now, and all the time, the refuge and protection of His own.

2. The impious conceal their intentions, but God sees them and knows how to frustrate them. (Isa. 8: 10.)

3. "They are dead, that sought the young child's life." In the end this will be said of all who arise against Christ and His kingdom, while Christ survives and continues to live. (Ps. 8: 10.)

O'er every foe victorious,
 He on His throne shall rest;
 From age to age more glorious,
 All-blessing and all-blessed.

II. JESUS IN THE TEMPLE AT THE AGE OF TWELVE.

Luke 2: 41-52.

¹The parents of Jesus went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover. ²And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. ³And when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem, and His parents knew it not. ⁴But they supposed Him to be in the company, and went a day's journey; and they sought for Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. ⁵And when they found Him not, they returned to Jerusalem seeking for Him.

⁶And it came to pass, after three days they found Him in

the Temple, in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. ⁷And all that heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. And when they saw Him, they were astonished. And His mother said unto Him, ⁸'Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold, Thy father and I sought thee sorrowing. And He said unto them, ⁹'How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. ¹⁰And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and He was subject unto them. ¹¹And His mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

¹²And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

¹ Where did the parents of Jesus go every year?

² How old was Jesus when He went along?

³ What occurred when the days of the feast were fulfilled?

⁴ Why were His parents at first without anxiety?

⁵ What did they do when they failed to find Him among their acquaintances?

⁶ Where did they find Him at last?

⁷ What impression did He make upon the doctors?

⁸ What did His mother say unto Him, when they found Him?

⁹ What was Jesus' reply?

¹⁰ How was thereafter the conduct of the boy Jesus towards His parents?

¹¹ What did Mary, His mother, do?

¹² What else is related of the boy Jesus?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Christian parents ought often to apply this beautiful story as a mirror for themselves. Though a three days' journey from their home, they attended regularly the high feasts at Jerusalem. Let not a long way to church vex you.

2. And what a beautiful example this story presents to all Christian children! Jesus at the age of twelve goes with His parents to the feast, becomes a son of the law; considering heavenly things He forgets all secular ones, and is subject to his parents.

Be Christ our pattern and our guide,
His image may we bear:
Oh, may we tread His holy steps,
His joy and glory share.

12. JOHN THE BAPTIST AND PREACHER OF REPENTANCE.

Matt. 3: 1-12. Mark 1: 1-18. Luke 3:1-18.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituræa and Trachonitis, in the highpriesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. ²And he came into all the region round about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins, saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet saying, ³The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

⁴And there went out unto him all the country of Judæa, and all they of Jerusalem, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁵And John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins; and did eat locusts and wild honey.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism he said unto them, ⁶O generation of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance. Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father. I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. ⁷Even now is the ax laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

And the people asked him, saying, What then must we do? And he answered and said unto them, ⁸He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise. And there came also publicans to be baptized, and they said unto him, Master, what must we do? And he said unto them, ⁹Extort no more than that which is appointed. And soldiers also asked him, saying, And we, what must we do? And he said unto them, ¹⁰Do violence to no man, neither exact anything wrongfully and be content with your wages. And as the people were in suspense, and reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether he were the

Christ, he answered, ¹¹"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but there cometh He that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing-floor; and He will gather His wheat into the garner; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire. ¹²And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

¹ When did John the Baptist assume his office?

² Where did he go, and what did he preach?

³ What had Esaias (Isaiah) prophesied concerning him?

⁴ What was the result of his preaching?

⁵ What manner of life did he lead?

⁶ What did he say unto the proud Pharisees and Sadducees?

⁷ How did he warn them?

⁸ What did he say unto the people?

⁹ What were his instructions to the publicans?

¹⁰ How did he answer the soldiers?

¹¹ What did he say unto those who thought he was the Messiah?

¹² What else did John preach?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The preaching of repentance and the remission of sins always proves powerful and efficacious, when coming from a repentant and believing heart, and is adapted for all times and ranks of men. (Acts 17: 30.)

2. God not only demands repentance of men, but also *fruits* worthy of repentance; for every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.

3. True repentance consists chiefly in remorse and sorrow for sin, and hating and turning from it always more and more; on the other hand, to take delight in living according to the will of God in all good works.

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh:
Awake, and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings.



13. JESUS IS BAPTIZED OF JOHN.

Matt. 3: 13-17. Mark 1: 9-13. Luke 3.

¹At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John would have hindered

Him, saying, ²I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me? But Jesus answering said unto him, ³Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. ⁴Then he suffered Him.

⁵And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway from the water, and prayed. ⁶And, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him. ⁷And John saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him. And, lo, a voice out of the heavens saying, ⁸This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.

¹ What occurred when Jesus was thirty years old?

² What did John say of him?

³ What did Jesus point out to him?

⁴ What did John do then?

⁵ What did Jesus do when He had been baptized?

⁶ What miraculous sign occurred in the heavens?

⁷ And what did John see?

⁸ What did the voice out of the heavens say?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Jesus was made under the law and was obedient in all things. Thank Him for it, that by doing and suffering He hath fulfilled all righteousness.

2. Jesus received the Spirit without measure, and was declared out of heaven the Son of God, that we should believe in Him and be filled with His Spirit.

3. God is displeased with sin, but is well pleased in His Son. God forgives us our sins for Christ's sake and makes us His children.

I will love Thee,—all my treasure
 I will love Thee,—all my strength!
 I will love Thee,—without measure,
 And will love Thee right at length.
 Oh, I will love Thee, Light divine,
 Till I die and call Thee mine.

14. THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

Matt. 4: 1-11.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness ¹to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, He hungered. ²And the tempter came and said unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, command that

these stones become bread. But He answered and said, ³It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Deut. 8: 3.)

Then the devil taketh Him into the holy city, and he set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto Him, ⁴If Thou art the Son of God, cast Thyself down: ⁵for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and on their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest haply Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, ⁶Again it is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God (Deut. 6: 16.)

Again, the devil taketh Him unto an exceeding high mountain and sheweth Him ⁷all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto Him, ⁸All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, ⁹Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. ¹⁰Then the devil leaveth Him.—And, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.

¹ Why was Jesus led of the Spirit into the wilderness?

² What occurred when He hungered after His long fasting?

³ With what words did Jesus rebuke him?

⁴ What did the tempter say when he set Jesus on the pinnacle of the temple?

⁵ Which passage of the Psalms did the tempter misuse? (Ps. 91: 11, 12.)

⁶ With what passage of Scripture did Jesus answer him?

⁷ What did the tempter show Him on the high mountain?

⁸ What did he say to Him?

⁹ With what words did Jesus defend Himself against this last attack?

¹⁰ What followed the victory of Jesus?

APPLICATIONS.

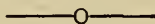
1. Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. (Heb. 4: 15.) Remember that you can overcome all temptations through Him. His victory is our victory. (Rom. 8: 37.)

2. Jesus rebuked the tempter with the word of God. You, too, grasp this sharp and two-edged sword of the Spirit and wield it skillfully with prayer and continued self-denial. (Heb. 4: 12.)

3. Jesus was tempted repeatedly and in various ways. Remember well, that the devil, the world and your own sinful nature never cease to tempt you. Render firm resistance. (Jas. 4: 7.)

4. Jesus was glorified after His severe trial; angels came and ministered unto Him. Remember that a crown of victory is promised to him that overcometh. (Rev. 3: 12.)

Alas! what hourly dangers rise!
What snares beset my way
To heaven, oh, let me lift mine eyes,
And hourly watch and pray.
Oh, keep me in Thy heavenly way,
And bid the tempter flee!
And let me never, never stray
From happiness and Thee.



15. THE FIRST DISCIPLES OF JESUS.

John 1: 29-51.

When John saw Jesus coming unto him, he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world; this is He of whom I said, ²After me cometh a man which is become before: for He was before me; and I have borne witness that this is the son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. And Jesus turned and said, ³What seek ye? They said unto Him, 'Rabbi, where abidest Thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw, and abode with Him that day. ⁵One of the two was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He findeth first his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, ⁶We have found the Messias. And he brought him unto Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, ⁷Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas (a stone).

The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, ⁸Follow me. Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathaniel and saith unto him, ⁹We have found Him, of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathaniel said unto him, ¹⁰Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to Him, and saith of Him, ¹¹Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathaniel saith unto Him, Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathaniel answered Him, ¹²Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said

unto thee, I saw thee underneath the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see the heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

- ¹ What did John cry out when he saw Jesus coming unto him?
- ² What had he said of Jesus before?
- ³ What did Jesus say unto the two disciples of John that followed Him?
- ⁴ What was their reply?
- ⁵ What was the name of one of the two disciples?
- ⁶ What did Andrew say to his brother Simon?
- ⁷ How did Jesus address Simon?
- ⁸ What did Jesus say unto Philip on the following day?
- ⁹ What did Philip say unto Nathanael?
- ¹⁰ How did he answer Philip?
- ¹¹ What did the Lord say of Nathanael?
- ¹² What does Nathanael confess of Jesus?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Repentance and contrition of heart must precede saving faith, like John the Baptist preceded Christ.

2. It is necessary and a matter of duty for a minister of the Word to direct the people that are attached to him, to Jesus, the only Saviour of sinners.

3. Observe that not only the Lord, but also believers, can gain disciples for Him. Andrew leads Simon, and Philip leads Nathanael unto Christ.

4. Nathanael did say, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" But he differs from many people, who use his language, but fail to examine the facts; for he came, and saw, and believed, and at last confessed joyfully, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God!"

Behold the sin-atoning Lamb,
 With wonder, gratitude and love! —
 Jesus, my Lord, I look to Thee:
 Where else can helpless sinners go?
 Thy boundless love shall set me free
 From all my wretchedness and woe.

16. JESUS AT THE MARRIAGE IN CANA.

John 2: 1-11.

On the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was bidden,

and His disciples, to the marriage. And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, ¹They have no wine. And Jesus saith unto her, ²Woman what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, ³Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. Now there were six waterpots of stone set there after the Jews' manner of purifying, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, ⁴Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And He saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the ruler of the feast. And they bare it. ⁵And when the ruler of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which had drawn the water knew;) the ruler of the feast calleth the bridegroom, and saith unto him, ⁶Every man setteth on first the good wine; and when men have drunk freely, then that which is worse: thou hast kept the good wine until now. ⁷This beginning of His signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee; and manifested His glory. And His disciples believed on Him.

⁸And the passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

¹ What did Mary say unto Jesus, about the people at the marriage?

² What reply did Jesus give?

³ What did Mary say unto the servants?

⁴ What did Jesus tell them to do?

⁵ What did the ruler of the feast taste, when they drew from the water-pots and brought it to him?

⁶ What did the ruler of the feast say unto the bridegroom?

⁷ What does the Evangelist say as to this miracle?

⁸ Where did Jesus go thereafter?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The Lord will not even permit Mary to tell Him what to do; He observes His own time; He knows best when and how to help.

2. How vividly the imperfections of this temporal life appear to us from this story! We see how marriage festivities even may be clouded by want and cares.

3. How glorious and sublime Jesus stands before us! He proves Himself the true helper in need, who can change worthless things into good, the common into precious things, our tears into gladness.

At some time or other the Lord will provide:

It may not be my time,
It may not be thy time,
And yet in His own time,
The Lord will provide.

17. JESUS AND NICODEMUS.

John 3: 1-22.

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The same came unto Jesus by night and said to Him, ¹Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these signs that Thou doest except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, ²Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto Him, ³How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, ⁴Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew. ⁵The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, ⁶How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel and understandest not these things? ⁸Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things? ⁹And no man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven. ¹⁰And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (O. T. 34), even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

¹ How did Nicodemus address Jesus?

² What did Jesus say unto him?

³ What was the answer of Nicodemus?

⁴ What further did Jesus say unto him?

⁵ With what does the Lord compare the working of the Holy Spirit?

⁶ What else did Nicodemus say to Jesus?

⁷ How does Jesus reproach Nicodemus?

⁸ How did Jesus affirm his statement?

⁹ How does He testify to His divine mission?

¹⁰ How does he announce Himself as the Redeemer of the world?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Our Saviour is not served with all kinds of nice compliments and the frequent saying of Lord, Lord; He wishes to carry out His high office and save us.

2. It certainly pleases Jesus when prominent people come unto Him, too, and call Him "Master"; but it pleases Him by no means, if they come secretly because of fear of their fellowmen.

3. If the Holy Spirit has lit the light of faith in the heart of man, it cannot remain concealed; sooner or later it will break forth with gleaming brightness. Behold Nicodemus at the burial of Jesus.

4. Neither a high position, nor honor, nor outward piety can save us; only faith in Jesus Christ the crucified one, the faith that changes us, bears us anew, can do so.

The Spirit by His heavenly breath
New life creates within;
He quickens sinners from their death
Of trespasses and sin.

18. CHRIST AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

John 4.

Jesus left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee. And He must needs pass through a city of Samaria called Sychar, and Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus by the well: it was about the sixth hour. ¹There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith unto her, ²Give me to drink. For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman saith unto Him, ³How is it that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me which am a Samaritan woman? For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, ⁴If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto Him, ⁵Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then hast Thou living water? Jesus answered and said unto her, ⁶Everyone that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. The woman saith unto Him, ⁷Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, ⁸Go, call thy husband and come hither. The woman answered and said unto Him, I

have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou saidst well, I have no husband. For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly. The woman saith unto Him, ⁹Sir, I see that Thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Jesus saith unto her, ¹⁰Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ. When He is come, He will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He.

The woman then left her waterpot and went into the city, and saith to the men, ¹¹Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: can this be the Christ? Then they went out of the city and came unto Him. And from that city many of the Samaritans believed on Him because of the word of the woman, who testified, He told me all things that I ever did. So when the Samaritans came unto Him, they besought Him to abide with them: and He abode there two days. ¹²And many more believed because of His word, and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy speaking: we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed Christ, the Saviour of the world.

¹ What happened when Jesus rested at Jacob's well?

² What does Jesus say to the Samaritan woman?

³ What does the woman answer Him?

⁴ What else does the Lord say to her?

⁵ What was her answer?

⁶ What did the Lord say to this?

⁷ What did the woman say then?

⁸ What did Jesus now ask her to do?

⁹ What impression did the words of Jesus make upon the woman?

¹⁰ Where and how will God be worshiped?

¹¹ What did the woman say to her neighbors?

¹² What effect did the words of Jesus produce upon the people?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Jesus, the untiring benefactor of man,¹ did good even in His hours of rest; and we are so slow and slothful in the service of God and man. Oh, how His example puts us to shame.

2. National and religious hatred has always formed a strong barrier between different nations; but the Gospel can break these down also.

3. Observe, how difficult it is for the natural man to perceive the things of the Spirit. The Searcher of hearts must come with the light of His word.

4. Do not believe only from hear-say, but come and hear for yourself, examine, believe and experience the saving power of the Gospel in your own heart.

See, dearest Lord, our willing souls
Accept Thine offered grace:
We bless the great Redeemer's love,
And give the Father praise.

—O—

19. CHRIST TEACHES IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT NAZARETH.

Luke 4: 14-30.

Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and a fame went out concerning Him, through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. ¹And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought: and He entered, as His custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And He opened the book and found the place (Isa. 61) where it was written, ²The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. And the eyes of all that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, ³Today hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears. ⁴And they wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of His mouth, and said, Is not this Joseph's son? And He

said unto them, ⁵Doubtless ye will say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here in Thine own country.

And He said, ⁶Verily I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own country. But of a truth I say unto you, There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land; and unto none of them was Elias sent, but only to Sarepta, in the land of Sidon, unto a widow. And there were many, many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. ⁷And they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue as they heard these things, and the rose up and cast Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw Him down headlong. ⁸But passing through the midst of them He went His way.

¹ What does this story relate of Jesus?

² What passage of the prophet Esaias (Isaiah) did He read?

³ What did He say after He had read the passage?

⁴ What impression did His words make upon His hearers?

⁵ What is the proverb He quoted.

⁶ What further did He say unto them?

⁷ What did they try to do when they felt that His words applied to them?

⁸ How did He escape from their hands?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Blessed custom, to attend church diligently on the Lord's day, to learn the word of God, to use the Holy Sacraments, to call publicly upon the Lord, and to give Christian alms. (Heb. 10: 25.)

2. To admire the minister and to praise his speech is useless, if one will not give up his sins but continue in his old ways. (Isa. 1: 5.)

3. Woe unto the minister, who speaks in favor of everybody, who never offends with his speech! Jesus, the teacher without an equal, could not do so, nor could He convert everybody.

Great Prophet of my God,

My tongue would bless Thy name:

By Thee the joyful news

Of our salvation came.

20. PETER'S DRAUGHT OF FISHES, AND THE CALLING OF THE APOSTLES.

Luke 4: 31. 6: 12-16.

¹Jesus departed from Nazareth and come down and dwelt in Capernaum. ²And He taught in the synagogues, and the people were astonished at His teaching: for His word was with authority—and it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon Him to hear the word of God, that He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, and He saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³And He entered into one of the boats which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land; and He sat down, and taught the multitude out of the boat.

And when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, ⁴Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answered and said unto Him, ⁵Master we toiled all night and took nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net. ⁶And when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

⁷But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was amazed, and all that were with him at the draught of the fishes which they had taken. And so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, ⁸Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And they brought their boats to land and left all, and followed Him.

And it came to pass, that He went into the mountain to pray, and He continued all night in prayer to God. And ⁹when it was day, He called His disciples; and He chose from them twelve, whom also He named apostles, that they should be with Him, and He should send them out to preach. And the apostles were ¹⁰Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon called Zelotes, Judas son of James and Judas Iscariot.

¹ Where did Jesus go when He left Nazareth?

² What did He do there?

³ Where else did He teach the people?

- * ⁴ What did He say then unto Peter?
- ⁵ What reply did Jesus receive from him?
- ⁶ What was the result of His obedience?
- ⁷ What impression did this wonderful draught of fishes make upon Simon?
- ⁸ What did the Lord say unto him?
- ⁹ What did Jesus do after He had continued in prayer a whole night?
- ¹⁰ Name the twelve apostles.

APPLICATIONS.

1. Nazareth cast out Jesus, but Capernaum received Him. Beware O Christian people, lest it be said of you sometime, "He came unto His own, and they received Him not." (John 1: 11.)

2. He, who labors according to the Word of the Lord and His command, be it in his temporal or heavenly calling, never labors in vain. "Believest thou this?" (I Cor. 15: 58.)

3. Has it ever happened to you, that when you observed the power and goodness of God, amazement at your sinfulness cast you down at the feet of Jesus? (Phil. 2: 10.)

4. Fisher of men — what does it mean? Not only the apostles were such, but every minister of the Word, every Sabbath-school teacher, every Christian ought to be. Whether speaking or not, every one ought to try to win by his godly walk his neighbor for Christ.

Send forth Thy heralds, Lord, to call
 The thoughtless young, the hardened old.
 A scattered, homeless flock, till all
 Be gathered to Thy peaceful fold.

21. ONE SICK OF THE PALSY HEALED.

Matt. 9. Mark 2. Luke 5.

Jesus came into His city (Capernaum), and behold, ¹they brought to Him a man sick with the palsy, lying on a bed. And they sought to bring him in and to lay him before Him. ²And not finding by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went up to the housetop and let him down through the tiles with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when Jesus saw their faith He said unto the one sick of the palsy, ³Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.

⁴And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth God. Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But Jesus perceiving their reasonings said unto them,

⁶Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk? ⁶But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins He saith to the one palsied, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house. ⁷And he took up his couch and departed to his house. ⁸When the multitudes saw it, they were amazed, and they glorified God who had given such power unto men.

¹ What occurred when Jesus returned to Capernaum?

² How did they bring the palsied man before Jesus?

³ What did Jesus say unto him?

⁴ What did some of the scribes think?

⁵ What did Jesus say unto them?

⁶ How did He prove that He possessed such power?

⁷ What did the palsied man do?

⁸ What impression did this miracle make upon the people?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Living faith generates love, makes active, and breaks through all hindrances; its objective and resting point is Jesus, where it is freed of its burden.

2. It is true that God alone can forgive sins; the scribes were not aware, however, that He had given this power to the Son of God and man, until He proved it before their eyes.

3. Jesus is the only physician who can heal body and soul. What avails a sound body if a soul sick unto death dwells in it?

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe!—

22. THE CENTURION IN CAPERNAUM.

Matt. 8. Luke 7.

When Jesus had ended His sayings before the people, He entered into Capernaum, and a certain centurion's servant who was dear unto him was sick and at the point of death. ¹And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto Him elders of the Jews, asking Him that He would come and heal his servant. ²And when they came to Jesus, they besought Him earnestly, saying, He is worthy that Thou shouldest do this for him. For he

loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue. And Jesus went with them.

And when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying unto Him, ³Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof. Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee: but say the word, and my servant shall be healed. ⁴For I also am a man set under authority, having under myself soldiers, and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him and turned and said unto the people that followed Him, ⁵I say unto you, I have not found so greath faith, no, not in Israel. ⁶And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick. But I say unto you, ⁷That many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

¹ What did the centurion in Capernaum do when his servant was at the point of death?

² What did the elders do when they came to Jesus?

³ What message did the centurion send by other friends to Jesus?

⁴ How did he prove his faith in the power of the words of Jesus?

⁵ What did Jesus say when He heard this?

⁶ What happened to the sick servant?

⁷ How did Jesus then indicate the election of the gentiles and the rejection of the Jews?

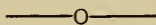
APPLICATIONS.

1. Sickness in a house is a heavy cross, but is often a source of great blessing; sickness urges to prayer, humility, faith, to the Lord Himself.

2. If a heathen by birth, who has seen only a few rays of the light of the Gospel showed such strong faith, how much stronger our faith ought to be, who enjoy the fulness of the light of grace.

3. It is certainly very painful if a faithful father must disinherit a wayward child. Because of their unbelief the treasures of grace of the kingdom of God were withdrawn from the Jews and given to believing gentiles. Let it be a warning, dear Christian! (Rev. 3: 11.)

Give us, O Lord, the eye of faith,
The inner world to see,
Then holy angels we shall view,
And their blest ministry.



23. THE SERMON IN THE MOUNT.

Matt. 5-7. Mark 3. Luke. 6.

¹And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain and when He had sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying, ²Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. ³Blessed (8) are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

I say unto you, ⁴That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven. ⁵I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father in Heaven. For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. Be ye therefore perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

⁶When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. After this manner therefore pray ye: ⁷Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the king-

dom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. ⁸Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

⁹All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets. ¹⁰Enter ye by the narrow gate. For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many be they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, which leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it. ¹¹Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven. ¹²And when Jesus had ended these words, the multitudes were astonished at His teachings: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

¹What is reported first of Jesus in this story?

²Whom did the Lord call blessed?

³How many beatitudes are given?

⁴What kind of righteousness must His disciples possess?

⁵What directions does He give them for this end?

⁶What instruction does He give as to prayer?

⁷Repeat the prayer which He taught.

⁸What several promises did He give to those that pray?

⁹Give the Golden Rule which Jesus taught.

¹⁰What did Jesus say of the way of life and the way of destruction?

¹¹How does He warn the hypocritical confessors?

¹²How did the people receive the sermon on the mount?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Whoever is looking for a model sermon will find one here. The great preacher on the mountain does not cleave to the mere letter, like the scribes, but penetrates into the spirit of the Scriptures and speaks on His own authority, and not only what others taught.

2. But perhaps you often think your pastor is too exact; but here you see that Jesus is much more exact, and compares the observance of His teachings as an entrance into eternal life, with a narrow gate. (Luke 13: 24.)

3. If you do not wish to stay behind at last, to deceive yourself and be lost, you will strive earnestly, pray fervently, believe firmly, and walk in the narrow way.

Thy Spirit, Lord, at large impart,
Expand and raise and fill my heart!
So may I hope my life shall be
Some faint return, O Lord, to Thee.

24. THE YOUNG MAN OF NAIN RAISED FROM DEATH.

Luke 7.

¹And it came to pass soon after, that He went to a city called Nain; and many of ²His disciples went with Him, and a great multitude. ³Now when He drew near to the gate of the city, behold, there was carried out one that was dead, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

⁴And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, ⁵Weep not. ⁶And He came nigh and touched the bier: and the bearers stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. ⁷And he that was dead, sat up and began to speak. And He gave him to his mother. And fear took hold on all: and they glorified God, saying, ⁸A great prophet is arisen among us: and God hath visited His people.

¹How does the Evangelist begin this story?

²Who accompanied Jesus to this city?

³Who met the Lord on the way?

⁴How was Jesus affected, when He saw the weeping mother?

⁵What did He say unto her?

⁶What else did He do?

⁷What took place upon His word?

⁸How did the amazed people praise God?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Jesus always sympathized cordially with man both in weal and in woe; He taught by example, "Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep." (Rom. 12: 15.)

2. Do not think at all, youthful heart, that youth is a sure protection against death! The aged must, the young may die. Is the Saviour yours, who eventually will gloriously revive you?

3. Life and death met at the gate of Nain. Life desired to enter; death, to go out. Life became master of death. Praise the Lord!

Jesus lives; and so shall I.

Death, thy sting is gone forever:

He, who deigned for me to die,

Lives, the bands of death to sever.

He shall raise me with the just:

Jesus is my Hope and Trust.

25. THE PENITENT SINNER.

Luke 7.

¹One of the Pharisees desired Jesus that He would eat with him. And He entered into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. ²And, behold there was a woman in the city, a sinner. When she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster box of ointment, and standing behind at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee which had bidden Him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, ³This man, if He were a prophet, would have perceived, who and what manner of woman this is, which toucheth Him: for she is a sinner. Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. ⁴A certain lender had two debtors. The one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. When they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Tell me, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, ⁵He, I suppose, to whom he forgave the most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

Turning to the woman Jesus said unto Simon. ⁶Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, ⁷Her sins, which were many, are forgiven, for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And He said unto her, ⁸Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with Him began to say among themselves, ⁹Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And He said unto the woman, ¹⁰Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.

¹ Who had invited the Lord to eat with him?

² What occurred when He sat at the table?

³ What did the Pharisee say within himself?

⁴ What did Jesus say unto him?

⁵ What was Simon's reply?

⁶ What did Jesus say to him then?

⁷ What did He say of the woman?

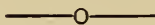
- ⁸ What word of consolation did Jesus say to the woman?
⁹ What did the others at the table begin to say within themselves?
¹⁰ What did Jesus say to the woman?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It is by no means a disgrace to weep over one's sins; but it is a disgrace and a detriment that so many conceal and deny their sins, and treat them with indifference and continue in them impenitently. (I John 1: 8.)

2. Not to be ashamed of the Saviour, to fall down at His feet, to receive forgiveness by faith, and to lead a new life, is always a sign of true repentance.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
 Grace to pardon all my sin;
 Let the healing streams abound,
 Make and keep me pure within.



26. JESUS AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

John 5.

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹Now there was in Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a multitude of them that were sick, blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water. Whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lying, and knew that he had been a long time in that case, He saith unto him, ²Wouldest thou be made whole? The sick man answered Him, ³Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but when I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, ⁴Arise, take up thy bed, and walk.

Now it was the Sabbath on that day. So the Jews said unto him that was cured, ⁵It is the Sabbath: and it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. But he answered them, ⁶He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk. Then they asked him, Who is the man that said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? But he that was healed wist

not who it was, for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, a multitude being in the place. Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, 'Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more lest a worse thing befall thee.

The man went away, and told the Jews, that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. ⁸Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh even until now, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, ⁹because He not only brake the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. Then Jesus answered and said unto them, He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent Him. ¹⁰Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life. ¹¹Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

¹ What is said of Bethesda in this story?

² What did Jesus say to the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years?

³ What was the sick man's reply?

⁴ What did Jesus then say unto him?

⁵ What objection did the Jews raise?

⁶ How did the healed man answer them?

⁷ What did Jesus say when He found him in the temple?

⁸ How did the Jews treat Jesus?

⁹ What angered them still more?

¹⁰ How does Jesus testify as to His divine mission?

¹¹ How does He prove His power?

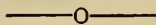
APPLICATIONS.

1. Oh, thou heart of Jesus, full of sympathy and mercy! If no one has compassion for the sufferer, no eye sees him, no hand moves to help him, then Thou art merciful, and dost help mightily, dost help perfectly!

2. It is an evil kind that seeks to criticise not only the imperfect works of man, but even the perfect works of God, forgetting important things over unimportant ones.

3. Is this thy gratitude, oh thankless world? Thou dost try to destroy the holy Son of God, thy greatest benefactor. Be patient! Another sound will be heard: His voice will penetrate even into the graves, and where will they be, that deal treacherously!

Jesus, most merciful and kind,
Beloved and loving, both combined;
Jesus, Thou good and gracious One!
Of Mary and of God, the Son.
Let saints below and saints above
Show forth Thy faithful, endless love.



27. SOME PARABLES OF JESUS.

Matt. 13. Mark. 4. Luke 8: 1-11.

It came to pass afterward, that Jesus went about through cities and villages preaching and bringing the good tidings of the kingdom of God. And when much people were gathered together and were come to Him out of the cities, He spake by a parable: ¹A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and it was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it grew, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it, and choked it. And other fell into good ground, and grew, and brought forth fruit a hundredfold.

When He had said these things, He cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And His disciples asked Him, What this parable might be. And He said, ²The seed is the word of God. ³And those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved. ⁴And those on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy, and these have no root: for a while they believe, and in time of temptation fall away. ⁵And that which fell among the thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit. ⁶But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Another parable set He before them, saying, ⁷The kingdom of Heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed it in his field, which is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree so that the birds of Heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof.

Another parable spake He unto them, ⁸The kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened.

⁹Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found and hid, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

¹⁰Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls, and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

¹ Repeat the parable of the sower.

² What does the seed represent?

³ What does the Lord say of the seed on the wayside?

⁴ What are we to understand by the rocky field?

⁵ What kind of hearers are represented by the thorny field?

⁶ What is the good land to teach us?

⁷ Repeat the parable of the mustard seed.

⁸ Unto what else does the Lord liken the kingdom of heaven?

⁹ Repeat the parable of the treasure in the field.

¹⁰ Repeat the parable of the pearl of great price.

APPLICATIONS.

1. If preaching is to bring fruit, it is not enough that the minister is truly a man of God, rightly dividing and expounding the word; the hearts of the hearers must be in a corresponding condition. (Heb. 4: 2.)

2. Therefore watch carefully the condition of your heart. Is your heart like the wayside, let it be broken with the ploughshare of the divine word; is it like the stony field, let it be crushed with the hammer of the law; if it is like a field of thorns, tear out the thorns with thorough repentance, that it may become good ground.

3. All truly great things have a small beginning—even the kingdom of God. Behold how the small mustard seed spreads out, and how the power of the Gospel penetrates, leavenlike, into the heart and life and effects a change.

4. Do you not yet perceive how desirable and full of bliss are the treasures and gifts of the kingdom of God? How like a costly treasure and a pearl of great price? Blessed is he who seeks and finds the treasures of heaven and willingly gives all he has for them.

Let not the world engage our love,
Nor cares our bosoms fill;
But fix our hearts on things above
That we may do Thy will.

28. JESUS STILLETH THE TEMPEST.

Matt. 8: 18-27. Luke 8: 22-25.

Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side. And there came a scribe and said unto Him, ¹Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. Jesus saith unto him, ²The foxes have holes and the birds of the Heaven have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of the disciples said unto Him, ³Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus saith unto him, ⁴Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

And it came to pass on one of those days that He entered into a boat, Himself and His disciples, and He said unto them, ⁵Let us go over unto the other side of the lake, and they launched forth. ⁶But as they sailed He fell asleep. ⁷And there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy. ⁸And they came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. ⁹Then He arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water; and they ceased and there was a calm. And He said unto them, ¹⁰Where is your faith? And being afraid they marvelled, saying one to another, ¹¹What manner of man is this! For He commandeth even the winds and the waters, and they obey Him.

¹How did a scribe address Jesus?

²What did Jesus say unto him?

³What did one of His disciples ask of Him?

⁴What did Jesus answer him?

⁵What did Jesus say unto His disciples one day?

⁶What is mentioned in particular, of Jesus?

⁷What occurred when Jesus slept?

⁸What did His disciples do?

⁹And what did Jesus do?

¹⁰How did He rebuke their want of faith?

¹¹What did the disciples say among themselves?

APPLICATIONS.

1. A quick fervor and a good opinion are not yet conversion and walking in a godly life. Following the Lord and self-denial must go together. You cannot have Jesus and at the same time your burrows, nests, honors and conveniences.

2. "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule." (Ps. 32: 9.)

Spirited horses must be restrained; lazy ones must be driven. The Lord treated the two applicants in this way.

3. Despair not, O Church of Jesus! Though thou art compared with a ship driven back and forth by so many a storm in this disquiet ocean of the world, Jesus, whom the winds and sea obey, is with thee. (Ps. 46.)

O Lord, the pilot's part perform,
And guide and guard me through the storm,
Defend me from each threatening ill:
Control the waves; say "Peace! be still."
Though tempest-tossed and half a wreck,
My Saviour through the floods I seek;
Let neither winds nor stormy main,
Force back my shattered bark again.

29. JAIKUS' DAUGHTER, AND THE SICK WOMAN.

Matt. 9: 18-25. Mark 5: 21-43. Luke 8: 40-56.

And as Jesus returned, the multitude welcomed Him; for they were all waiting for Him! ¹And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought Him to come into his house. ²For he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she lay dying. But as He went the multitudes thronged Him.

³And a woman having a sickness twelve years, had spent all her living upon physicians, and could not be healed of any. She came behind Him, and touched the border of His garment; and immediately she felt that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter said, and they that were with him, ⁵Master, the multitudes press Thee and crush Thee, and sayest Thou Who touched me? But Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. ⁶And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before Him, declared in the presence of all the people, for what cause she touched Him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, ⁷Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

While He yet spake, there came one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, ⁸Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. Jesus hearing it, answered him, saying, ⁹Fear

not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. And when He came to the house, He suffered no man to go in, save Peter and James and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all were weeping and bewailing her. But ¹⁰He said, Weep not; for she is not dead, but sleepeth. ¹¹And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. ¹²And He put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately. And He commanded that something be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed. But He charged them to tell no man what had been done.

¹ What happened when Jesus returned?

² Why was Jesus asked to come into the house of Jairus?

³ What took place on the way?

⁴ What did Jesus say?

⁵ What did Peter reply?

⁶ What did the woman say when Jesus repeated His words?

⁷ How did Jesus dismiss the woman?

⁸ What report did one of Jairus' servants bring him?

⁹ What did Jesus then say to Jairus?

¹⁰ How did He comfort the weeping parents?

¹¹ How did those present receive His words?

¹² What did Jesus do now and what did He command?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The Saviour is greatly pleased even today, and does not complain, if the multitudes crowd Him, and all kinds of people that labor and are heavy laden come from all sides, seeking His help.

2. Observe how the world can weep and laugh at the same moment; but neither is heartfelt. Only after the Lord has manifested His life-giving power are the hearts moved and filled with amazement and astonishment.

In the weary nights of sickness,
 In the throes of grief and pain,
 When we feel our mortal weakness,
 When all human help is vain,
 By Thy mercy,
 Oh, deliver us, good Lord!

30. JOHN THE BAPTIST IS BEHEADED.

Matt. 14: 1-12. Mark 6: 16-29. Luke 9: 7-9.

Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison ¹for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And ²Herodias set herself against him, and desired to kill him; and she could not. ³For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous man and a holy; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. He also feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

Now when John heard in prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto Him, ⁴Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and tell John the things which ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

And when Herod on his birthday made a supper to the chief men of Galilee, ⁶the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat at meat. Then the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, ⁷Whatsoever thou wilt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went out and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in with haste unto the king, and said, ⁸I will that thou forthwith give me in a charger the head of John the Baptist. ⁹The king was exceeding sorry; but for the sake of his oath, and of them that sat at meat, he would not reject her. ¹⁰And straightway the king sent an executioner and commanded to bring his head. And he went and beheaded him in prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother. ¹¹When the disciples of John heard thereof, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

At that time Herod heard the report concerning Jesus. And he said unto his servants, ¹²This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; therefore he doeth such works. And the apostles came to Jesus, and told Him all.

- ¹ Why had Herod cast John into prison?
- ² What did Herodias wish to do unto John?
- ³ Why could she not?
- ⁴ What question did John in prison ask Jesus?
- ⁵ What did Jesus say to John's messengers?
- ⁶ What occurred when Herod and many guests celebrated his birthday?
- ⁷ What did Herod promise Herodias on his oath?
- ⁸ What did she ask on the evil advice of her mother?
- ⁹ Why did he grant this cruel petition, though it made him sorry?
- ¹⁰ What did they do unto John?
- ¹¹ What honor did his disciples show him afterwards?
- ¹² What did Herod say to his servants, when he heard of Jesus?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Nothing will save from despair, when it is seen how great and small defy the truth and trample on justice, except faith in divine providence and a future retribution.

2. It is too bad that not infrequently offense goes forth from the palaces of the prominent people. Avoid their example, for God will visit punishment for the sins of the great as well as for those of the common people.

3. What terrible results may follow from a frivolous dance, or a passing sensual feast! And yet how often one hears, "It will not hurt!"

At His call, the dead awaken,
 Rise to life from earth and sea;
 All the powers of nature shaken
 By His look, prepare to flee:
 Careless sinner,
 What will become of thee?

31. JESUS FEEDETH FIVE THOUSAND MEN, AND WALKETH UPON THE SEA.

Matt. 14. Mark 6. Luke 9. John 6.

After these things Jesus went over the sea at the city of Tiberias in Galilee. ¹And a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His miracles, which He did on them that were sick. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there He sat with His disciples. Now the passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Then Jesus lifted up His eyes and saw a great multitude come unto Him; and ²He was moved with

compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing. And the day began to wear away. Then came the twelve and said unto Him, ³Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place. But He said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And Jesus said unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, ⁴Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. One of His disciples, Andrew, saith unto Him, ⁵There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves and two fishes: but what are these among so many?

Jesus said, Make the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down upon the green grass, in number about five thousand, in ranks by hundreds and by fifties. ⁶And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. And when they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. ⁷So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten. When therefore the people saw the sign which Jesus did, they said, ⁸this is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world. ⁹When Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He withdrew again into a mountain Himself alone.

And when evening came, His disciples went down unto the sea and entered into a boat and were going over to Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. And the sea was rising by reason of a great wind that blew, and they were distressed by the waves. ¹⁰About the fourth watch of the night, Jesus cometh unto them, walking on the sea. And when His disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, it is an apparition; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, ¹¹Be of good cheer, it is I. Peter answered Him

and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee upon the waters. And He said, Come. ¹²And Peter went down from the boat and went upon the waters to come to Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, Lord, save me. And Jesus stretched forth His hand, and took hold of him, and saith, ¹³O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And they went up into the boat, and the wind ceased. ¹⁴And they that were in the boat, came and worshiped Him, saying Of a truth, Thou art the Son of God.

¹ What occurred when Jesus went across the sea?

² What did Jesus do, when He saw the people?

³ What did the disciple say unto Jesus?

⁴ How does Philip calculate, when Jesus said, give ye them to eat?

⁵ What did Andrew say to this?

⁶ What did Jesus do when about five thousand men had sat down?

⁷ How many fragments were gathered?

⁸ What did the people now say concerning Jesus?

⁹ Where did Jesus go after this?

¹⁰ How did Jesus return to His disciples?

¹¹ What did He say unto them, when they thought they had seen an apparition?

¹² What was Peter's experience, when he tried to walk on the water?

¹³ What did Jesus say unto him?

¹⁴ What did the people in the boat do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. You will seek in vain for a better friend and a greater benefactor than Jesus, for He has, more than any one else, a clear eye, a sympathetic heart, and a plenteous, strong and willing hand.

2. Mark this beautiful teaching: Jesus first provides for the spiritual needs of the people; He feeds their souls with the word of God, before He thinks of their physical wants. (Matt. 6: 33.)

3. The number of Jesus' disciples would no doubt be greater, if He always provided bread and fishes, free miraculous food; but Jesus desires not to be a "bread-king," but the king of our hearts.

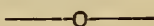
In some way or other the Lord will provide;

It may not be my way,

It may not be thy way,

And yet in His own way,

The Lord will provide.



32. THE WOMAN OF CANAAN.

Matt. 15. Mark 7.

Thereafter Jesus went about in Galilee: for He would not go about in Judæa, ¹because the Jews sought to kill Him. ²And Jesus went out thence, and withdrew into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house, and would have no man know it: but He could not be hid; for ³a Canaanitish woman, whose daughter had an unclean spirit, having heard of Him, came and fell down at His feet saying, ⁴O Lord, Thou son of David, have mercy on me; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, ⁵Send her away; for she crieth after us.

But Jesus answered, ⁶I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she came and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, help me. And He answered and said, ⁷It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to the dogs. But she said, ⁸Yea, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then answered Jesus and said unto her, ⁹O woman, great is thy faith: be it done unto thee even as thou wilt. And ¹⁰her daughter was healed from that hour.

¹ Why did Jesus go about in Galilee, and not in Judæa?

² Where did He go afterwards?

³ Why could He not remain hid?

⁴ How did the woman address Jesus?

⁵ What did His disciples say, when Jesus made no reply?

⁶ What was Jesus' answer?

⁷ What did He say unto the woman, when she kept on beseeching Him?

⁸ How did the woman receive such a humiliation?

⁹ What did Jesus then say unto her?

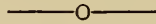
¹⁰ What was the result of her perseverance?

 APPLICATIONS.

1. If, perhaps, you, O father, mother, have an unfortunate child that is "vexed with a devil"—with the spirit of disobedience, of refractoriness, of vanity—I can give no better advice than this: Carry your child in the arms of prayer to Jesus.

2. The faith of the Canaanitish woman was great indeed, if one remembers, ¹) the sterility of the soil on which it grew; ²) the obstacles it surmounted; ³) the victory it achieved.

Great God, now condescend
 To bless our rising race;
 Soon may their willing spirits bend,
 The subjects of Thy grace.
 Oh, what a pure delight
 Their happiness to see;
 Our warmest wishes all unite,
 To lead their souls to Thee.



33. A DEAF-MUTE AND A BLIND MAN HEALED.

Mark 7, 8.

When Jesus departed again from Tyre and Sidon, He came unto the sea of Galilee. And ¹they brought unto Him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they besought Him to lay His hand upon him. And ²He took him aside from the multitude privately, and put His fingers into his ears, and He spat, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And He charged them that they should tell no man. But the more He charged them, so much the more they published it; and they were beyond measure astonished, saying, ³He hath done all things well: He maketh the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

And Jesus came to Bethsaida. ⁴And they brought to Him a blind man, and besought Him to touch him. And ⁵He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the village; and when He had spat on his eyes, and laid His hands upon him, He asked him, Seest thou aught? And he looked up, and said, ⁶I see men as trees, walking. ⁷Then again He laid His hands upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored and saw everything clearly. And He sent him home, saying, Tell it not to anyone.

¹ What occurred when Jesus came again to the sea of Galilee?

² How did the Lord heal the deaf-mute?

³ What did the people say when they beheld this miracle?

⁴ Whom did they bring to Jesus in Bethsaida?

⁵ What did Jesus do with the blind man?

⁶ What did he answer when Jesus asked him whether he could see?

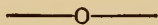
⁷ What else did Jesus do unto him?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The Lord took the deaf-mute aside from the people. Christ acts in this way today. You have experienced days in which His help and grace fell upon you like showers, or in which He visited you above others with trials and tribulations. Did you recognize His object?

2. Oh, how many people are yet spiritually blind—who know not the things which belong unto their peace; spiritually deaf—who hear not the calling voice of divine grace; spiritually mute—if they are to speak to God in prayer and proclaim His glory. Remember, Jesus is the Physician for the soul.

Bless, O my soul, the God of grace,
His favors claim thy highest praise;
Why should the wonders He hath wrought
Be lost in silence, and forgot?



34. THE MAN THAT WAS BORN BLIND.

John 9.

Jesus passed by and saw a man blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, ¹Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered, ²Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. ³When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made a clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam. ⁴He went away, therefore, and washed, and came seeing. The neighbors, and they which saw him aforetime, that he was a beggar, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him. He himself said, I am he. Now it was the Sabbath when Jesus opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees asked him how he received his sight. And he said, ⁵The man that is called Jesus, put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Then said some of the Pharisees, This man is not from God, because He keepeth not the Sabbath. But others said, how can a man that is a sinner do such signs? And there was a division among them. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of Him in that He opened thine eyes? And And he said, ⁶He is a prophet.

The Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents

of him that had received his sight; and they asked them, saying, 'Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How doth he now see? His parents answered and said, ⁸'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now seeth, we know not. Ask him, he is of age: he shall speak for himself. These things spake his parents, because they feared the Jews. ⁹'For the Jews had agreed already, that if any man should confess Him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. So they called a second time the man that was blind, and said, ¹⁰'Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, ¹¹'Whether he is a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then they said to him again, What did He do to thee? How opened He thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you even now, and ye did not hear. Wherefore would ye hear it again? Would ye also become His disciples? ¹²'Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art His disciple; but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God hath spoken unto Moses; but as for this man, we know not whence He is. The man answered and said unto them, ¹³'Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not whence He is, and yet He opened mine eyes. We know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and do His will, him He heareth. Since the world began it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing. ¹⁴'They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out. And finding him, He said, ¹⁵'Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him? Jesus said unto him, Thou hast seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee. And he said, ¹⁶'Lord, I believe; and he worshiped Him. And Jesus said, ¹⁷'For judgment came I into this world, that they which see not, may see; and that they which see may become blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with Him heard these things, and said unto Him, ¹⁸'Are we also blind? Jesus said unto them, ¹⁹'If ye were blind, ye would have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

¹ What did the disciples ask Jesus concerning the man born blind?

- ² What did Jesus reply?
³ What did Jesus do unto the blind man, and what did He say unto him?
⁴ What took place then?
⁵ How did he relate the details of his healing?
⁶ What did he confess of his wonderful benefactor?
⁷ What did the unbelieving Jews say unto his parents?
⁸ How did they answer the Jews?
⁹ Why did they hesitate with their answer?
¹⁰ What did the Jews say unto him a second time?
¹¹ What reply did they receive this time?
¹² What did the Jews say when he asked whether they wished to become His disciples?
¹³ What did he reply to their answer?
¹⁴ What did the unbelieving Jews say at last?
¹⁵ What did Jesus say unto him who had been cast out, when He found him?
¹⁶ What did he answer?
¹⁷ Why did Jesus come into the world?
¹⁸ What did the Pharisees say to this?
¹⁹ How did Jesus answer them?
-

APPLICATIONS.

1. Never be hasty in judging. It is no proof that a person is a sinner above others, if God has laid a cross upon him. It often redounds to the salvation of man and the glory of God. (1 Pet. 4: 19.)

2. Never be too severe in your judging, if it pertains only to trifles. Though Jesus performed an unheard-of miracle, they censured Him for applying clay on the Sabbath!

3. Be thankful, too. Be in earnest in the cause of your Saviour, if you have received salvation and grace from Him. Do you know, too, like the man who had been born blind, what you formerly were and what you are now?

Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling;
All Thy faithful mercies crown:
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation;
Enter ev'ry trembling heart.

35. JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

John 10.

Jesus said, ¹Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ²But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. When he hath put forth all his own, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. ³This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them.

Jesus therefore said unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. ⁴I am the door: by me if any man enter, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture. The thief cometh not but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: ⁵I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly.

⁶I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. ⁷But he that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth: and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep. ⁸I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and am known of mine, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ⁹And other sheep have I, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, and one shepherd.

And there arose a division among the Jews because of these sayings. ¹⁰Many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye Him? ¹¹Others said, These are not the sayings of one possessed; can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

¹ What does Jesus teach concerning false shepherds?

² How does He describe the good shepherd?

³ How did His hearers understand His parable?

⁴ What further does Jesus say in His parable?

- ⁵ What are the faithful ones to have in Him?
- ⁶ What did Jesus do as the good Shepherd?
- ⁷ On the other hand, what does a hireling do?
- ⁸ What else does Jesus say as to Himself and His own?
- ⁹ What does He say about the heathen nations?
- ¹⁰ What impression did His sayings make upon His hearers?
- ¹¹ What did others say?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Blessed are they who can say with the Psalmist, "The Lord is my shepherd." As a good shepherd faithfully tends his flock, seeks the lost, carries the weak, nurses the sick and leads his sheep out and in, and on good pasture, thus Jesus cares for His own. (Ps. 23.)

2. What a consolation, the Lord knows His own! Where is the harm, if you are misjudged by short-sighted and envious people, if only you are recognized by the Lord, and you know Him and follow His voice!

3. Do you understand now, that it is our Saviour's will and object, that both Jews and heathen shall be saved? He desires to gather the heathens through *you*, as well as through a missionary Church, so that there shall be one shepherd and one flock.

I am Jesus' little lamb,
Therefore glad and gay I am;
Jesus loves me, Jesus knows me,
All that's good and fair He shows me,
Tends me ev'ry day the same,
Even calls me by my name.

36. PETER AND THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST.

Matt. 16, 17. Mark 8, 9. Luke 9: 18-36.

Jesus came into the parts of the village of Cæsarea Philippi, and He asked His disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of Man is? ¹They said, Some say, Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He said unto them, But who say ye that I am? ²And Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, ³Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood revealed it not unto thee, but my Father in heaven. And I also say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will

build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

From that time began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things, and be killed, and the third day be raised up. And Peter began to rebuke Him, saying, ⁴Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall never be unto Thee. But He turned, and said unto Peter, ⁵Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men. Then said Jesus unto His disciples, ⁶If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. What shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

⁷And after six days Jesus taketh with Him Peter, and James, and John his brother and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, ⁸and He was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias and talked with Him. And Peter said unto Jesus, ⁹Lord, it is good for us to be here: if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. ¹⁰While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. And behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him. When the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. ¹¹And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And lifting up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, ¹²Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen from the dead.

¹ What did the disciples of Jesus answer, when He inquired as to the opinion of the people?

² What was Peter's confession, when He asked, Who say ye that I am?

³ What did Jesus now say unto them?

⁴ What did Peter say, when Jesus spoke of His suffering?

⁵ What was Jesus' answer?

⁶ What did He say unto all of His disciples?

⁷ Which of His disciples did Jesus take with Him upon a high mountain?

⁸ What occurred when they were on the mountain?

⁹ What was Peter's remark to Jesus?

¹⁰ What took place while Peter was yet speaking?

¹¹ What did Jesus say to His disciples, now sore afraid?

¹² What did Jesus command them, when they came down from the mountain?

APPLICATIONS.

1. No man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 12: 3.) Remember, Christian friend, that you also are anointed with the Holy Spirit, that you may confess His name.

2. Even the holiest men, while in this life, have only a small beginning of this knowledge and faithful obedience. When Peter says, "Thou art the Christ," he speaks properly; but when he says unto the Lord, "Be it far from Thee, Lord," his speech offends the Lord. In this instance the old man speaks; in the other, the new.

3. The Lord shows glimpses of His glory to His own, in order to prepare and strengthen them for coming days of suffering. He will not hear of tabernacles on the mountain of the transfiguration.

Who is there like Thee,
 Jesus, unto me?
 None are like Thee, none above Thee,
 Thou are altogether lovely.
 None on earth have we,
 None in heaven, like Thee.

37. THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Luke 10.

A certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Him, saying, ¹Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readeest thou? And he answering said, ²Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And He said unto him, ³Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, ⁴And who is my neighbor?

Jesus made answer and said, ⁵A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers,

which both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. ⁶And by chance a certain priest was going down that way: and when he saw him, he passed by. And in like manner a Levite, also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by. ⁷But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. ⁸Which of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers? And he said, ⁹He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, ¹⁰Go, and do thou likewise.

It came to pass, as they went, that He entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also ¹¹sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word. ¹²But Martha was cumbered about much serving. And she came to Him, and said, ¹³Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister did leave me to serve alone? Bid her, therefore that she help me. But Jesus answered and said unto her, ¹⁴Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful. Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

¹ How did a lawyer address Jesus?

² What was his answer, when Jesus asked him, "What is written in the law?"

³ What did Jesus say unto him then?

⁴ What did the lawyer ask Him now?

⁵ What was the Lord's reply?

⁶ Who passed by the unfortunate man?

⁷ Who showed mercy unto him?

⁸ What did the Lord now say to the lawyer?

⁹ What was his reply?

¹⁰ What did Jesus say at last?

¹¹ What did Mary do when Jesus visited at her house?

¹² What is said of her sister Martha?

¹³ What did Martha say unto Jesus?

¹⁴ What did Jesus say unto her?

APPLICATIONS.

1. There were people even in the days of our Saviour that understood remarkably well to add question to question, yet had few deeds to show. But read Luke 10: 28.

2. After a lesson like this, no one ought to ask, "Who is my neighbor?" It is he who is in need of your help, and you ought not waste time with questions as to nationality, position, reputation or denomination. True charity is impartial and helps according to ability.

3. Where two serve the Lord, both cannot always do the same thing, one Christian ought therefore not censure another, if he serves the Lord in a different way. If Martha censures Mary, her censure falls back upon herself.

Christ bound our wounds and poured in oil
 And wine with tender care,
 And bore us to an Inn — His Church —
 And safely lodged us there.—
 What beams of grace and mercy, Lord,
 In Thy example shine!
 Oh, may we give Thee thanks and praise
 By showing love like Thine.

38. THE GREAT SUPPER.

Luke 14.

Jesus went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying on unto Jerusalem. And it came to pass that He went into the house of the chief of Pharisees to eat bread. And he spake a parable to the guests, when he remarked how they chose out the chief seats; saying, ²When thou art bidden of any man to a marriage feast, sit not down in the chief seat; lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him shall come and say to thee, Give this man place; and then thou begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest place; that when he that hath bidden thee cometh, he may say to thee, Friend go up higher. Then shalt thou have glory in the presence of all that sit at meat with thee. For ³whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Jesus said to him also that had bidden Him, ⁴When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbors; lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou

makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; because they have not wherewith to recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just. And when one of them that sat at meat heard these things, he said unto him, ⁵Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

But Jesus said unto him, ⁶A certain man made a great supper, and he bade many. And he sent forth his servants at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. ⁷And they all began to make excuse. ⁸The first said unto him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go out and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

And the servant came, and told his lord these things. ⁹Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and maimed and lame and blind. And the servant said, Lord, what thou didst command is done, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, ¹¹Go out into the highways and hedges and constrain them to come in, that my house may be filled. ¹²For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste my supper.

¹ Where did Jesus come, when going to Jerusalem?

² What did He say to the guests that tried to get the chief seats?

³ What particular lesson were they to learn from His parable.

⁴ What did He say to the host?

⁵ What remark was made by one of the guests?

⁶ What else did Jesus say in a parable?

⁷ What did the invited guests say when they were told to come?

⁸ What excuses did they make?

⁹ What occurred when the master of the house heard it?

¹⁰ What report did the servant bring, who had been sent forth?

¹¹ Where did his master send him again?

¹² What did his master say of those who despised his supper?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Time is short. Jesus knew this very well, since only three years were allowed Him for His extensive work; He therefore made use even of His mealtime, to minister in His great office. "Be not slothful in business." (Rom. 12: 11.)

2. True love is yielding, ready for sacrifices; true love practices

charity, where it cannot hope to receive. "For if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? Sinners also love those that love them." (Luke 6: 32.)

3. The Pharisee remarks haughtily and thoughtlessly, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." He felt uncomfortable because of the chiding remarks of the Lord and tried, in a polite way, to change the subject. But the Lord showed him, that they were the very ones who rejected God's invitation to the table of grace, in consequence of which the despised heathens should be called.

God calling yet! shall I not hear?
Earth's pleasures shall I still hold dear?
Shall life's swift passing years all fly,
And will my soul in slumber lie?
God calling yet! and shall I give
No heed; but still in bondage live?
I wait, but He does not forsake;
He calls me still; my heart, awake!

39. THE PRODIGAL SON.

Luke 15.

Jesus was teaching and said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, ¹Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. ²And not many days after the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there he wasted his substance with riotous living. ³And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have been filled with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. But when he came to himself, he said, ⁴How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

And he arose, and came to his father. ⁵But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven,

and in thy sight, I am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, ⁶Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and drink and make merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

⁷Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing; and he called to him one of the servants, and inquired what these things might be. And he said unto him, ⁸Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. ⁹And he was angry, and would not go in. And his father came out, and intreated him. But he answered and said to his father, ¹⁰Lo, these many years do I serve thee, and I never transgressed a commandment of thine: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this thy son came, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou killedst for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, ¹¹Son, thou art ever with me, and all that is mine is thine. But it was meet that we should make merry: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost and is found.

¹ What did the younger son say to his father?

² What did he do with his portion?

³ How did he fare among strangers?

⁴ What did he say, when he came to himself?

⁵ How did his father receive him, when he returned?

⁶ What did the father say to his servants?

⁷ What is related of the elder brother?

⁸ What reply did he receive from the servant?

⁹ What remarks did he make?

¹⁰ What did he say to his father, when asked to come in?

¹¹ What representations did his father now make?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Observe the result, when a man willfully tears himself away from God, and squanders his inheritance and his talents, and rushes from sin to sin; he finally reaches the greatest misery.

2. It is no disgrace to confess and regret one's sins before God and man, but it is a disgrace to have sinned and to remain in sins.

3. Beware of the spirit of surliness if God receives your erring

brother in grace and into glory, when he returns.—The elder son clearly represents the selfrighteous Pharisees; the younger son, the heathen. (Luke 15: 2.)

Return, O wanderer, return,
And seek an injured Father's face;
Those warm desires that in thee burn,
Were kindled by reclaiming grace.
Return, O wanderer, return,
Thy Saviour bids thy spirit live;
Go to His bleeding feet, and learn
How freely Jesus can forgive.

40. THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

Luke 16: 19-31.

There was a certain rich man, and ¹he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day. And a certain beggar named Lazarus ²was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. ³And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom. ⁴And the rich man also died, and was buried. ⁵And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; and he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.

But Abraham said, ⁶'Son, remember, that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. ⁷And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us from thence. Then he said, ⁸'I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham saith, ⁹'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, ¹⁰'Nay, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. Abraham saith unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.

- ¹ What does Jesus say of the rich man?
- ² How did poor Lazarus fare?
- ³ What else is related of him?
- ⁴ What happened to the rich man?
- ⁵ Whom did he see now, and how did he pray?
- ⁶ What answer did he receive?
- ⁷ Why was it impossible to grant his prayer.
- ⁸ What did he ask afterward of Abraham?
- ⁹ What was Abraham's reply?
- ¹⁰ What, however, was the rich man's opinion?
- ¹¹ With what words did Abraham refute this opinion?

APPLICATIONS.

1. To be rich is no sin; yet be master over your wealth, and not its slave. Luxury—to live in revel and riot—stifles every good thought and every better sentiment of the heart. (Jas. 5: 1.)

2. Poverty as such will not save; but if the poor man bears his burden patiently and is satisfied with that which the Lord provides, he will be acceptable to Him. Riches and poverty come not by chance.

3. Do not depend on the appearance of spirits; they might harm you more than help you. You have the word of God; if you will not believe it you would not believe a messenger from the regions of the dead.

May we Thy bounties thus,
As stewards true receive,
And gladly, as Thou blessest us,
To Thee our first-fruits give.

41. CHRIST RAISETH LAZARUS.

John 11.

A certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany. His sisters therefore sent unto Jesus, saying, ¹Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard it, He said, ²This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When He heard that he was sick, He abode two days in the place where He was. After this He saith to His disciples, Let us go into Judæa again. His disciples say unto Him, Master, the Jews were but now seeking to stone Thee; and goest thou thither again? Jesus saith unto them, ³Our friend Lazarus is dead; but I go, that I may awake

him. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

⁴When Jesus came, He found that he had been in the tomb four days already. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him: but Mary still sat in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, ⁵Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; but I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, He will give Thee. Jesus saith unto her, ⁶Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto Him, ⁷I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, ⁸I am the resurrection, and the life. He that believeth in me, though he die, yet shall he live. Believest thou this? She saith unto Him, ⁹Yea, Lord: I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had said this, she went away, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is here, and calleth thee. And she, when she heard it, arose quickly, and came unto Him. For Jesus was not yet come into the village.

When Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, ¹⁰Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. ¹¹When Jesus saw her weeping, He was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him! But some of them said, ¹²Could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind have caused that this man also should not die? And Jesus came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus saith, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldst see the glory of God? So they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And ¹³Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me; and he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And ¹⁴he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

¹ What message did the sisters of Lazarus send to Jesus?

- ² What did Jesus say when He heard it?
- ³ What did Jesus say to His disciples after two days?
- ⁴ Where did Jesus find Lazarus when He came?
- ⁵ What did Martha say to Jesus, when she met Him?
- ⁶ What word of comfort did He say to her?
- ⁷ What was her reply?
- ⁸ What assurance did Jesus give her then?
- ⁹ What confession does Martha make now?
- ¹⁰ What did Mary say to Jesus, when she fell down before Him?
- ¹¹ How was Jesus affected, when He saw Mary weeping?
- ¹² What did some of the Jews say about Jesus?
- ¹³ What did Jesus do when they had lifted away the stone?
- ¹⁴ What took place, when Jesus called Lazarus with a loud voice?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Trials and tribulations may enter the homes of the godly, too; but it is to prove their faith, and for the manifestation of God's glory. The darker the nights, the brighter the stars.

2. How well it is, in times of trouble, to seek refuge with a Friend, who is greater than the trouble. Choose Jesus for the dearest friend of your home and your soul.

3. Lazarus was given back to his sisters—but only to lose him by death once more. When Jesus will at last awake our dear ones dead, they shall never die again.

Everything we have and cherish
 Hastens onward to the grave;
 Earthly joys and pleasures perish,
 Time can nothing, nothing save.
 Oh, abide, abide with Jesus,
 Who Himself forever lives,
 Who from death eternal frees us
 And who life eternal gives!

42. THE LAST JOURNEY OF JESUS TO JERUSALEM.

Luke 17, 18.

And it came to pass, as Jesus went to Jerusalem, that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And 'as He entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when He saw them, He said unto them, ²Go and show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed.

And ³one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God, and he fell upon his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, ⁴Were not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine? Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger? And He said unto him, Arise, and go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

And ⁵they brought unto Him also their babes, that He should touch them. But when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto Him, saying, ⁶Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

⁷And it came to pass, as He drew nigh unto Jericho, a blind man sat by the wayside begging. And hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, ⁸Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me! And they that went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace. But ⁹he cried out so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto Him. And when he was come near, He asked him, saying, ¹⁰What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? And he said, ¹¹Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, ¹²Receive thy sight: thy faith hath made thee whole. ¹³And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

¹ What occurred when Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem?

² What command did Jesus give the ten lepers crying for His mercy?

³ What did one of them do, when he saw that he was healed?

⁴ What did Jesus say to him?

⁵ Why did they bring babes unto Him?

⁶ What did He say to the disciples that rebuked them?

⁷ Whom did Jesus meet near Jericho?

⁸ What did the blind man cry out, when he heard that Jesus was going by?

⁹ What did he do when they told him to be quiet?

¹⁰ What did Jesus ask the blind man, when he was brought to Him?

¹¹ Give his reply.

¹² What did Jesus now say to him?

¹³ What happened then?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Ingratitude is a great and grievous sin. Oh, how many receive God's earthly blessings, health, wealth and position, as if they were spoils, and thereby forfeit heavenly blessings.

2. Oh, thou loving heart of a mother, thou canst not rest, until thou hast brought thy child to Jesus and it shares His blessing! Only a want of understanding may try to hinder this. Ye fathers, read Ephesians 6: 4.

3. "Blind man, poor man." Yet happy is he who possesses a spiritual eye, who recognizes his Redeemer and Saviour and calls upon Him when in distress. Has He not already drawn near to you? Have you never heard the sound of His feet?

Jesus, my All in all Thou art,
 My rest in toil, my ease in pain,
 The medicine of my broken heart:
 In storms my peace; in loss my gain;
 My comfort midst all grief and thrall,
 My life in death, my All in all.

43. JESUS' ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM.

Matt. 21. Mark 11. Luke 19. John 12.

When they drew nigh unto Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying unto them, ¹Go into the village that is over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them and bring them unto me. And if anyone say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. Now this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, ²Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. The disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their garments, and they set Him thereon. ³And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them in the way. And as He was drawing nigh at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen; saying, ⁴Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. But the multitudes

that went before Him, and that followed, cried, saying, ⁵Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

And some of the Pharisees said, Master, rebuke Thy disciples. And He answered and said, ⁶"I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out. And when He drew nigh, He saw the city, and wept over it, saying, ⁷"If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee and thy children, and compass thee round and keep thee in on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground, and not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

And when he was come unto Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, Who is this? And the multitudes said, ⁸"This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and looked round about upon all things. And ⁹"the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple; and He healed them. ¹⁰"But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David: they were moved with indignation, and said unto Him, Hearest Thou what these are saying? And ¹¹"Jesus saith unto them, Yea; did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?

¹ What did Jesus command two of His disciples to do when they came near Bethphage?

² Give the promise of the prophet that was now being fulfilled.

³ What honor did the multitude show to the Lord, when He rode by?

⁴ What did His disciples say?

⁵ How did the multitudes that went before Him and followed, rejoice and what did they say?

⁶ What did Jesus say unto the Pharisees who tried to stop them?

⁷ What did He say when He wept and looked upon the city?

⁸ How did the people answer the question "Who is this?"

⁹ What took place when Jesus went into the temple of God?

¹⁰ How did the chief priests and the scribes act on account of this?

¹¹ How did Jesus reply to their insolent demand?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The command which Jesus gave His two disciples was most likely to awaken all kinds of scruples; but they did in faith what

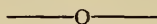
Jesus had commanded, and the Lord Himself helped them to surmount all difficulties.

2. This one word, "The Lord hath need of them," was decisive for the owner of the ass and colt; he let the Lord have them. Behold, the Lord hath need of you also, but you infinitely more of Him; have you already given Him yourself, your talents, powers, property, etc.?

3. When Christ the Lord comes in triumph, He has a numerous following; but how few remain with Him when the cry arises, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

4. It is a sure indication that you are not a friend of Jesus, or some one else, if bitter hatred and envy arise within your heart, whenever you hear people praise Him.

But chiefest in our cleansed breast,
Eternal, bid Thy Spirit rest;
And make our secret soul to be
A temple pure, and worthy Thee.
Hosanna! Lord! Hosanna in the highest.



44. THE WITHERED FIG TREE.

Matt. 21: 17-46. Mark 11: 11-26. Luke 19: 45-48.

At eventide Jesus went out of Jerusalem to Bethany with the twelve, and lodged there. And 'on the morrow, in the morning, when they were come out of Bethany, He hungered. And He saw a fig tree afar off by the wayside having leaves. ²And he came, if haply He might find anything thereon. And when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves. And Jesus said, ³No man eat fruit from thee henceforward for ever. And immediately the fig tree withered away.

And they came to Jerusalem, and 'Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and that bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves and would not suffer that any man should carry a vessel through the temple. And He taught, and said unto them, ⁵Is it not written, My house shall be called the house of prayer for all nations? But ye have made of it a den of robbers. And ⁶all the people were astonished at His teaching, and were very attentive to hear Him. And every evening He went forth out of the city.

As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto Him, ⁷Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which Thou

cursedst is withered away. Jesus answering saith unto them, ⁸Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do what is done to the fig tree, but even if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, ⁹All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And ¹⁰when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any one: that you Father in heaven also may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

¹ What occurred, when Jesus returned with His disciples to the city?

² What did Jesus find on the fig tree?

³ What did He say to the fig tree, and what happened to it?

⁴ What did Jesus do when He came to Jerusalem?

⁵ What did He say to the people committing sacrilege in the temple?

⁶ In what esteem was Jesus held by the people?

⁷ What did Peter say unto Jesus the next morning?

⁸ What answer did the Lord give him?

⁹ What further did Jesus say concerning prayer?

¹⁰ In what spirit should we pray?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If your piety is only a mock-piety, only leaves without fruits of sanctification and good works, like those of the Jews, the same lot will befall you.

2. The Lord had patience for three years with His fig tree; He dug about and dunged it — He taught His nation and wrought miracles, but found no fruit. Its period of grace has expired; the command is, "Cut it down."

3. Sacrilegious people are an abomination in the sight of the Lord. Never try to make the Church, your worship and your confession subserve mercantile and selfish ends.

4. If you wish God to forgive you, you must have the assurance of His divine grace, that it is your earnest desire to forgive your neighbor with all your heart.

Thou Lord of all above and all below the sky,
Prostrate before Thy feet I fall, and for Thy mercy cry.
Forgive my follies past, the crimes which I have done;
Bid a repenting sinner live through Thine Incarnate Son.

45. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

Mark 12: 1-12. Luke 20: 9-19.

Jesus began to speak in parables. ¹A man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a pit for a winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into another country for a long time. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, ²that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruits of the vineyard. And ³they took him and beat him, and sent him away empty.

And again he sent unto them another servant; ⁴and him they wounded in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled. And he sent another; ⁵and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some. He had yet one, a beloved son. And he said, ⁶What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.

But when the husbandmen saw the son, they reasoned one with another, saying, ⁷This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. And they cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁸What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do unto them? They said unto Him. ⁹He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their season.

¹ Repeat the parable of the vineyard.

² Why did the lord of the vineyard send a servant to the husbandmen?

³ How did they treat the servant?

⁴ How did they treat the second servant he sent?

⁵ How the third and many others?

⁶ What did the lord of the vineyard say now?

⁷ What did the husbandmen say when they saw his son?

⁸ What question did Jesus ask His hearers?

⁹ What did they answer Him?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The bearers of office and honors in the Church, whom God has placed as husbandmen and stewards in His vineyard, must at last give a strict account of their stewardship.

2. The leaders of the Jews, who always persecuted the servants of God and the prophets, and finally killed His only begotten Son, unwittingly pronounced their own sentence.

3. Justice will be victorious in the end, and all the world must plead guilty in the presence of God.

Help us to wait the hour
In toil and holy fear,
When, manifested with Thy saints,
Thou shalt again appear.

46. THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND THE END OF THE WORLD.

Matt. 24. Mark 13: 1-13. Luke 21: 5-38.

Jesus went forth out of the temple, and His disciples came to Him and showed Him the buildings of the temple. And one of His disciples said unto Him. ¹Master, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings! And Jesus said unto him, ²Verily, I say unto you, the time will come, in which there shall not be left here one stone upon another which shall not be broken.

And as He sat on the mount of Olives over against the temple, they asked Him, ³Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall the sign be of Thy coming, and of the end of the world? Jesus answered, ⁴When ye hear of wars and rumors of war, be not troubled; these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be earthquakes in divers places; and there shall be famines, pestilences, and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But all these things are the beginning of sorrow. ⁵In your patience ye shall win your souls. For he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. And ⁶this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come. ⁷When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then let them that are in Judæa flee unto the mountains. And let him that is on the housetop not go down, nor enter in, to take anything out of his house. And let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray that your flight be not in the winter. ⁸For in those days shall be

tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be. For there shall be great distress upon the land, and wrath unto this people; and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive unto all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled. But ⁹immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven; and upon earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And ¹⁰He shall send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. ¹¹But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the son, but the Father. ¹²Take heed, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and with cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

¹ What did His disciples say unto Him about the building of the temple?

² What did Jesus prophesy?

³ What did His disciples ask Him then?

⁴ By what sign should they know it?

⁵ What was His admonition for this time of distress?

⁶ What particular sign did He mention?

⁷ What were they to do when they should see Jerusalem besieged?

⁸ Why were they to flee into the mountains?

⁹ What signs shall announce the end of the world?

¹⁰ What will Jesus do when He appears?

¹¹ Can anyone set the definite time or hour of the coming of Christ?

¹² What admonition does Jesus give in reference to His coming?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The destruction of Jerusalem and of the ancient world, of Sodom and Gomorrah and many great empires, was a prelude to the coming end of the world, and at the same time a proof thereof. (II Pet. 3: 5 ss.)

2. How faithfully the Lord provides for His own! He points out their danger and directs them to flee from adversity. But there is no greater adversity than to be in sin, therefore flee from sin, for "sin is a reproach to any people."

3. You have more important things to do than to try to search out, when the Lord will come. Rather ask yourself, Am I ready?—and labor earnestly in your preparation for that awful day. (II Pet. 3: 11.)

That day of wrath! that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away!
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?
Oh! on that day—that wrathful day,
When man to judgment wakes from clay,—
Be Thou the trembling sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!



47. THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

Matt. 25.

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ¹They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And ²the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, ³Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you. Go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. ⁴And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, ⁵Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour, wherein the Son of man cometh.

⁶But when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations. And He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, ⁷Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me in. Naked, and ye clothed me. I was sick, and ye visited me. Then shall the righteous answer Him saying, ⁸Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? Or athirst, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? Or naked, and we clothed Thee? When saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, ⁹Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, ¹⁰Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat. I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in. Naked, and ye clothed me not. Sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer, saying, ¹¹Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, ¹²Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous unto eternal life.

¹ Wherein did the wise virgins differ from the foolish ones?

² What did the foolish virgins say to the wise?

³ What was their reply?

⁴ What was done while they went?

⁵ What did the lord say, when they said, Open to us?

⁶ How does Jesus describe the last judgment?

⁷ What shall He say unto those on His right hand?

⁸ What shall they answer?

⁹ What shall the King say?

¹⁰ What terrible judgment will be passed upon those on His left?

¹¹ What will their answer be?

¹² What will be the King's reply?

APPLICATIONS.

1. How foolish, indeed, those people act, who are satisfied with the outward appearance of Christianity and meanwhile neglect the main thing, the treasure and plenty of divine grace. When the Lord musters them, they will not pass.

2. The Lord certainly requires the fruits of faith, but those who bring them do not place their trust in them, nor keep an account of them.

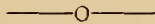
3. The decision on the last day is final and irrevocable; there is no higher court, to which an appeal can be made. The sentence will simply be, Come! or, Depart from me.

Day of judgment, day of wonder! Hark! — the trumpet's awful sound.

Louder than a thousand thunders shakes the vast creation round;
How the summons will the sinner's heart confound.

See the Judge, our nature wearing, clothed in majesty divine!

Ye, who long for His appearing, then shall say, this God is mine!
Gracious Saviour, own me in that day for Thine.



48. THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Matt. 26. Mark 14. Luke 22. John 13.

On the first day of unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the passover, His disciples said unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we go and make ready that Thou mayest eat the passover? And He sent two of His disciples, Peter and John, and said unto them, ¹Go into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him; and wheresoever he shall enter in, say to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will show you a large room furnished and ready; and there make ready for us. ²And the disciples came into the city, and found as He had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

And when it was evening He came with the twelve. And when the hour was come He sat down and the twelve apostles with Him. ³And He said unto them, I have heartily desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. And ⁴the supper be-

ing ended, He arose from supper and laid aside His garments, and took a towel, and girded Himself. Then He poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter, and he said unto Him, Lord, shalt Thou wash my feet? Jesus said unto him, ⁵If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto Him, ⁶Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

When He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and sat down again, He said unto them, ⁷Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them.

And as they sat and were eating, Jesus said, ⁸Verily, I say unto you, One of you that eateth with me, shall betray me. ⁹And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him one by one, Is it I? He answered and said unto them, ¹⁰It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish, shall betray me. The Son of man indeed goeth as it is written of Him: but woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man, if he had not been born. And Judas, which betrayed Him answered and said, ¹¹Is it I, Rabbi? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

¹²And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto them, and said, ¹³Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also He took the cup after supper; and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them and said, ¹⁴Take, and drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you and for many unto remission of sins. ¹⁵This do, as oft as ye drink of it, in remembrance of me.

¹ What command did Jesus give two of His disciples at the time of unleavened bread (Easter)?

² How did they find it?

³ What did Jesus say to His disciples when He sat down?

⁴ What service did Jesus show them after supper?

- ⁵ What did Jesus say unto Peter when he wanted to refuse Him to wash his feet?
- ⁶ What did Peter say then?
- ⁷ What did the Lord now say to all of them?
- ⁸ How did Jesus indicate His betrayer?
- ⁹ What impression did this make upon the disciples.
- ¹⁰ What else did Jesus say about His betrayer?
- ¹¹ How did Judas ask, and how did Jesus answer him?
- ¹² How did Jesus institute the holy supper?
- ¹³ What He say when He gave them the bread?
- ¹⁴ What did He say when He gave them the cup?
- ¹⁵ What special command did He add?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The eating of the Jewish passover required an extremely careful and extensive preparation. Ought you not, my Christian friend, prepare yourself carefully for the Lord's supper? (I Cor. 11: 28.)

2. Oh, the pain it gives the holy heart of Jesus, if His own disclose a want of humility, of peaceableness and readiness to serve! Must not His deep self-humiliation, His lowly service of a menial put to shame our pride, ambition, and our quarrelsome disposition?

3. Oh, with what love, and meekness, and patience the divine "Sinner's Friend" seeks the sinner to save him from destruction! He warns and admonishes Judas to the last hour; but he remained hardened.

4. A precious inheritance, that Jesus left to His own in the Holy Supper. He gives His body and His blood as "the meat that abideth unto eternal life." Do not consider it of little importance; be not a despiser of the sacraments.

The blest memorials of Thy grief The sufferings of Thy death,
We come, dear Saviour, to receive, But would receive with faith.—
Increase our faith, and hope, and love; Lord, give us all that's good;
We would Thy full salvation prove, And share Thy flesh and blood.

49. THE LAST DISCOURSES OF JESUS.

John 14, 15, 16.

And Jesus said unto His disciples, ¹Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. And whither I go ye know; and the way ye know. ²I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father, but by me. If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will

come unto him, and make our abode with him. ³But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. ⁴Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ⁵Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and he hath nothing in me. But that the world may know, that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

⁶I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman; every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye except ye abide in me. ⁷I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. ⁸If a man abideth not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into fire, and they are burned.

⁹If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you. ¹⁰Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples. Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you. Continue ye in my love. ¹¹If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love. ¹²This is my commandment, That ye love one another, even as I have loved you.

¹ With what words did Jesus comfort His disciples?

² What does Jesus say that He is?

³ What promise from the Father did He give?

⁴ What was His parting benediction?

⁵ How did He announce His impending suffering?

⁶ How did He picture the union between Himself and the Father?

⁷ How does He represent the union between Himself and His own?

⁸ What does He say of those who do not abide in Him?

⁹ What does He promise those who abide in Him and in His word?

¹⁰ Wherein is His Father glorified?

¹¹ What proof of abiding in His love does He mention?

¹² And finally, what did He command them so urgently to do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If Jesus is the way, then walk therein; if He is the truth, then believe in Him; if He alone leads to the Father, then follow Him faithfully. For, certainly, you wish to come home unto the Father?

2. Are you a fruitful branch of the true vine,—a true member of the Head which is Christ? Remember, He Himself declares, “Without me ye can do nothing.”

3. The admonition to true brotherly love, alas, is necessary even in our days. There is, indeed, a love with the tongue; but little in deed and in truth. (I John 3: 18.)

Living or dying, Lord,
I ask but to be Thine;
My life in Thee, Thy life in me
Makes heaven forever mine.

50. JESUS IN GETHSEMANE.

Matt. 26. Mark 14. Luke 22. John 17, 18.

Jesus lifting up His eyes to heaven, said, ¹Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee: even as Thou gavest Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou has given Him. ²And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and even Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. I glorified Thee on earth, having accomplished the work, which Thou hast given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. I manifested Thy name unto men whom Thou gavest me out of the world. And I am no more in the world, and I come to Thee. ³Holy Father, keep them in Thy name which Thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are. ⁴Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also, that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that Thou didst send me.

⁵When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth, as His custom was, with His disciples over the brook Cedron, to the mount of Olives. And Jesus saith unto them, ⁶All ye shall be offended in me this night. For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

But Peter answered and said unto Him, ⁷If all shall be offended in Thee, I will never be offended. Jesus said unto him, ⁸Verily, I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he said to Him, Even if I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee. And in like manner said they all.

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, where was a garden, into which He entered, and His disciples. And when He was at the place, he said unto them, ⁹Sit ye here, while I go yonder and pray. And He took with Him Peter and James and John, the two sons of Zebidee, and began to be sorrowful and sore troubled. Then saith Jesus unto them, ¹⁰My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: abide ye here and watch with me. And ¹¹He parted from them about a stone's cast, and He kneeled, and prayed, saying, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.

And He cometh to His disciples, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, ¹²Simon, sleepest thou? Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And again He went away, and prayed, saying, ¹³O my Father, if this cup may not pass away, except I drink it, Thy will be done. And He came and again found them sleeping: for their eyes were heavy, and they wist not what to answer Him. And He left them again, and went away, and prayed a third time, saying the same words. And ¹⁴there appeared unto Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat became as it were drops of blood falling down upon the ground. Then cometh He to his disciples, and saith, ¹⁵Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand that the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us be going; behold he is at hand that betrayeth me.

¹ How does Jesus begin his intercessory prayer?

² Wherein does eternal life consist?

³ How does He pray for the unity of His disciples?

⁴ For whom else did He pray?

⁵ Where did Jesus go then with His disciples?

⁶ What did He say now to His disciples?

- ⁷ What did Peter answer?
- ⁸ Of what did the Lord assure him?
- ⁹ What did Jesus say and do when they arrived in the garden of Gethsemane?
- ¹⁰ How did He express Himself to His disciples?
- ¹¹ What did He do then?
- ¹² What did He say to the sleeping disciples?
- ¹³ What did He pray the second and the third time?
- ¹⁴ How was He strengthened when His agony became greatest?
- ¹⁵ What did He say unto His disciples when He returned to them?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If Jesus prays so earnestly for the unity of all believers, can those who create discord in His Church and form sects, still be considered His friends?

2. Gethsemane is a school of prayer, as well as the scene of contest and suffering. The Saviour loved to pray in quiet solitude; He prayed in humility and without ceasing, and in submission to His Father's will.

3. Before our Saviour entered upon His great and unspeakable suffering for our reconciliation, He spent a whole hour in prayer. Do not forget to call upon God for His help and assistance in every important undertaking, especially when in distress and tribulation. (Ps. 50: 15.)

4. As your Redeemer and Surety suffered inexpressible anguish in Gethsemane, you may be assured in your greatest temptation, oh, believing soul, that Christ your Lord has redeemed you from the anguish and torment of hell.

Oh, garden of Olives, thou dear honored spot,
 The fame of thy wonders shall ne'er be forgot;
 The theme most transporting to seraphs above;
 The triumph of sorrow,—the triumph of love!

51. JUDAS BETRAYS JESUS.

Matt. 26: 47-56. Mark 14: 43-52. Luke 22: 47-53. John 18: 2-11.

Now Judas also, which betrayed Him knew the place: for ¹Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples. ²Judas, then, having received the band of soldiers, and officers, from the chief priests and the Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. And Judas went before them. Jesus, therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They

answered Him, ³Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. And Judas also, which betrayed Him, was standing with them. ⁴When therefore He said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus answered, ⁵I told you that I am He: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the word might be fulfilled, which He spake, Of them which Thou gavest me I have lost none. And ⁶he that betrayed Him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He; take Him, and lead Him away safely. And when he was come, straightway he came to Him, and saith, Rabbi, rabbi; and kissed Him. And Jesus said unto him, ⁷Friend, wherefore art thou come? Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? Then they came, and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him.

When they that were about Him saw what would follow, they said, ⁸Lord, shall we smite with the sword? Then Simon Peter, having a sword drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, ⁹Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and He shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels? Suffer ye thus far. And ¹⁰He touched his ear, and healed it.

In that hour said Jesus to the multitudes, ¹¹Are ye come out as against a robber with swords and staves to seize me? I sat daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not. This is your hour, and the power of darkness. And ¹²His disciples all forsook Him, and fled. And a certain young man followed with Him, having a linen cloth about him over his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him. But he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

¹ How did Judas happen to know of the place of prayer?

² How does he come there now?

³ What did the multitude answer, when Jesus asked, Whom seek ye?

⁴ What occurred, when Jesus said again, I am He?

⁵ What else did Jesus say to them

⁶ How were the captors to know Jesus?

⁷ What did Jesus say to Judas, when he kissed Him?

⁸ What did His disciples do, when Jesus was taken?

- ⁹ What did Jesus say to the fiery Peter?
¹⁰ What miracle did Jesus perform on Malchus?
¹¹ What did Jesus say unto the multitudes?
¹² What did His disciples do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. That Judas betrayed his Master, was bad enough; that he did so under the cloak of simulated friendship, made his act doubly abominable. Be true and sincere in your greetings.

2. How great the contrast between Peter's conduct here and in the palace of the high priest! Not infrequently the Lord must repair what His friends have bungled in their untimely zeal.

3. Again and again the Lord points out in His suffering the counsel of God; He desires neither to go out of its way, nor to meet force by force. "Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things." (Luke 24: 26.)

4. The disciples flee. Oh, the vacillation, and the fleeing from the cross! Hold back your judgment. Their inconstancy reflects the nature of all mankind.

Lord, the course Thou art pursuing
Is a course of glorious gain;
But the work which Thou art doing
Is a work of bitter pain;
In a Passion-tide beginning.
It will lead to bright renown;
By it Thou a way art winning
To an everlasting crown.

52. JESUS BEFORE THE SPIRITUAL COURT.

Matt. 26: 57-68. Mark 14: 53-65. Luke 22: 54, 55. John 18: 12-24.

The band and the chief captain and the officers of the Jews seized Jesus, and bound Him and led Him away. And ¹they led Jesus to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. The ²high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His teaching. Jesus answered him, ³I have spoken openly to the world; I ever taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and in secret spake I nothing. Why askest thou me? Ask them that have heard me, what I spake unto them. ⁴And when He had said this, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus, and said, Answerest Thou the high priest so?

Jesus answered him, ⁵If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

⁶Now the chief priests and the elders and the whole council sought witness against Jesus to put Him to death; and found it not. ⁷Many bare false witness against Him, but their witness agreed not together. And the high priest stood up and said unto Him, ⁸I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God the Blessed? ⁹Jesus saith unto him, I am. Nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven. ¹⁰Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What further need have we of further witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard His blasphemies. What think ye? And ¹¹they all condemned Him and said, He is worthy of death. ¹²Then did they spit in His face. And the men that held Him, mocked Him, and beat Him with the palms of their hands, and blindfolded Him, and struck Him in the face, and asked Him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote Thee? And many other things spake they against Him reviling Him.

¹ Where did they lead Jesus after they had bound Him?

² About what did they question Him first?

³ What was Jesus' answer?

⁴ How was His answer received?

⁵ What did Jesus say to this arrogant man?

⁶ What was the vain effort of the spiritual judges?

⁷ How was the witness or testimony?

⁸ What did the high priest say unto Him in a solemn manner?

⁹ What did Jesus then confess before the whole council?

¹⁰ What did the high priest say when he heard this true testimony?

¹¹ What sentence did they pass?

¹² What abuses were heaped upon Him in their presence?

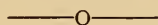
APPLICATIONS.

1. How strikingly Jesus describes His present situation and His judges when He declares, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." He was "delivered" by the Father, and they, in their blindness, rejected the Messiah.

2. No justice may be expected, where judgment is passed according to preconceived opinions, and not according to the testimony. They simply declared that He must die, without respect to the truth and justice.

3. The world acts in the same way to-day; if the truth is told they become bitterly angry and desire to destroy the witnesses of truth.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered
Was all for sinners' gain:
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But Thine the deadly pain:
Lo, here I fall, my Saviour,
'Tis I deserve Thy place,
Look on me with Thy favor,
Vouchsafe to me Thy grace.



53. PETER'S DENIAL.

Matt. 26: 69-75. Mark 14: 66-72. Luke 22: 56-62. John 18: 17-27.

¹And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and entered in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But ²Peter was sitting without at the door. So ³the other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, went out and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then saith the maid that kept the door unto Peter, ⁴Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, ⁵I am not; I know Him not, neither know I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. Now the servants and the officers were standing there, having made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they were warming themselves.

And when he was gone out, another maid saw him, and saith unto them that were there, ⁶This man was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And they said unto him, Art thou not also one of His disciples? ⁷And he denied again and began to swear, I know not this man.

And after a while, about the space of one hour, one of the servants of the high priest and a kinsman of him whose ear Peter cut off, confidently affirmed and said, ⁸Of a truth, this man is also one of them, for he is a Galilean. Did I not see thee in the garden with Him? And they that stood by, said unto him, ⁹Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee. ¹⁰Then Peter denied again and began to curse and to swear, I know not the man, of whom ye speak. ¹¹And straightway the second time the cock crew.

And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And ¹²Peter

remembered the word of the Lord, how that He said unto him, Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice. And ¹³Peter went out and wept bitterly.

¹ Which ones of the disciples followed Jesus?

² Where did Peter sit down?

³ Who brought Peter in?

⁴ What did the doorkeeper say to him?

⁵ What answer did he give her?

⁶ What did another maid say to him when he went out?

⁷ What was his reply?

⁸ What did the servant of the high priest say to him?

⁹ What did the others say, who stood near?

¹⁰ What was Peter's answer?

¹¹ What happened then?

¹² What did Peter remember, when Jesus looked at him?

¹³ What did Peter do then?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Remember always to heed the word of the Lord, and not to go in ways He forbids; theirs is treacherous ground. How bitterly Peter had to rue it.

2. Remember never to rely upon your own strength; it will forsake you quickly. Peter thought that he was strong enough to go into death with the Lord, and a weak maidservant made him fall.

3. Remember what a single look of grace from the loving eye of Jesus may do; it dispels darkness, rouses the benumbed senses, and melts the stony heart.

4. Remember finally, that Jesus had to suffer much, not only from His enemies, but from His friends as well; the betrayal of Judas, the flight of His disciples, and Peter's denial gave Him greater pain than the thorns and nails. These only penetrated the members of His body; those, His heart.

O gracious God, in whom I live,
 My feeble efforts aid;
 Help me to watch, and pray, and strive,
 Though trembling and afraid.
 Increase my faith, increase my hope,
 When foes and fears prevail;
 And bear my fainting spirit up,
 Or soon my strength will fail.

54. THE END OF JUDAS THE TRAITOR.

Matt 27: 1-10. Mark 15: 1. Luke 22: 66-71.

As soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and scribes came together, and led Jesus into their council, saying, ¹Art Thou the Christ? tell us. And He said unto them, ²If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I ask you, ye will not answer, nor let me go. But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, ³Art Thou then the Son of God? And He said unto them, ⁴Ye say that I am. And they said, What further need have we of witness? we have heard from His own mouth. ⁵And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes to put Him to death; and they bound Him, and led Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

Then Judas, which betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself. And ⁶he brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood. But they said, ⁷What is that to us? See thou to that. And ⁸he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and went away and hanged himself. And falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out (Acts 1:18). ⁹And the chief priests took the pieces of silver, and said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

¹ What did they ask Jesus again, when the morning had come?

² What was His reply?

³ What did they all say then?

⁴ What was His answer?

⁵ What did they now decide to do?

⁶ What did Judas do when Jesus was condemned to death?

⁷ What reply did he receive?

⁸ What did Judas do now?

⁹ What did they do with the blood money?

APPLICATIONS.

1. To act without thinking first has brought many a one into great trouble. Thus it was with Judas. If, therefore, you are about to do anything, consider the consequences first.

2. Evil people may indeed help to bring you into trouble; but if you appeal to them in your distress, they have neither compassion nor help; they simply say, "See thou to that."

3. All those who antagonize Jesus and blaspheme Him and desire to put Him out of the way, must in the end, like Judas, testify to His innocence.

4. See to it, that your remorse is like that of Peter, and not like that of Judas. The remorse of Judas knew nothing of faith and divine compassion, and came—too late. Oh, what a terrible word, "Too late!"

Thine anger, like a pointed dart,
Shall pierce the foes of stubborn heart;
Or words of mercy, kind and sweet,
Shall melt the rebels at Thy feet.

55. JESUS BEFORE THE TEMPORAL COURT.

Matt. 27: 11-14. Mark 15: 1-5. Luke 23: 1-11. John 18: 28-38.

And the whole company of them rose and led Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment. And it was early. And the Jews entered not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but might eat the passover. Pilate therefore went out unto them, and said, ¹What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, ²If this man were not an evil-doer, we should not have delivered Him up unto thee. Then Pilate said unto them, ³Take Him, and judge Him according to your law. The Jews said unto him, ⁴It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spake, signifying by what manner of death He should die. Then they began to accuse Him, saying, ⁵We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that He Himself is Christ a King.

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto Him, ⁶Art Thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered, ⁷My kingdom is not of this world: If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews. Pilate therefore said unto Him, ⁸Art Thou a King then? Jesus answered, ⁹Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end have I been born and am come into the world, that I should bear witness unto

the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, ¹⁰I find no crime in Him.

And the chief priests and elders accused Him of many things. And though He was accused, He answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto Him, Hearest Thou not how many things they witness against Thee? And ¹¹He gave him no answer, not even to one word: insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly. And ¹²when he knew that He was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him unto Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem in these days. Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was of a long time desirous to see Him; ¹³because he had heard concerning Him many things; and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. And he questioned Him in many words. But ¹⁴He answered him nothing. And ¹⁵Herod with his soldiers set Him at nought, and mocked Him, and arraying Him in a gorgeous (white) apparel sent Him back to Pilate.

¹ What did Pilate ask the Jews, when he came out to them?

² What was their reply?

³ What did Pilate say then?

⁴ What had they to answer to their own shame?

⁵ What unjust accusations did they bring against Him?

⁶ What did Pilate say to Jesus in the judgment hall?

⁷ How did Jesus answer him?

⁸ What did Pilate say to this?

⁹ What was Jesus' reply?

¹⁰ What did Pilate say to the Jews after this hearing?

¹¹ What did Jesus do, when Pilate asked, "Hearest Thou not, how many things they witness against Thee?"

¹² Where did Pilate now send Jesus?

¹³ Why had Herod desired for a long time to see Jesus?

¹⁴ How did Jesus answer his questions?

¹⁵ How did they treat Jesus after this?

APPLICATIONS.

1. More truth and uprightness are found with honest heathens than with hypocritical Jews and Christians. The Jews declared that Jesus was worthy of death; Pilate says, I find no crime in Him.

2. The world has no understanding of Christ's person and kingdom; for no man can say that Jesus is the Lord except by the Holy Spirit, whom the world does not possess.

3. Jesus is not the man for those people who make sport of holy

things and engage in impertinent questioning, and are bent upon all kinds of jugglery. He answers Herod not a word, who now heaps mockery and contempt upon Him.

The sorrow, shame, and death were Thine,
And all the stores of wrath divine!
Ours are the pardon, life, and bliss!
What love can be compared with this?

56. JESUS IS CONDEMNED.

Matt. 27: 15-23. Mark 15: 6-14. Luke 23: 17-23. John 18: 39; 19.

¹Now at the feast the governor was wont to release unto the multitude one prisoner, whom they would. And ²he had at that time a notable prisoner called Barabbas, lying bound with them that had made an insurrection, men who in the insurrection had committed murder. And the multitude went up and began to ask him to do as he was wont to do. When therefore they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, ³Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ the King of the Jews? For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him up. And while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, ⁴Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man. I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.

Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes, that they should ask for Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. But the governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? And the whole multitude cried all at once, saying, Away with this man, and ⁵release unto us Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a murderer. And Pilate spake unto them again, desiring to release Jesus, saying, ⁶What then shall I do unto Jesus which is called Christ? And they cried out and said, ⁷Crucify Him, crucify Him. And Pilate said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath this man done? I have found no cause of death in Him: I will therefore chastise Him, and release Him. But they were instant with loud voices, asking that He might be crucified. And their voices and of the chief priests prevailed, and they cried out more exceedingly, Crucify Him.

When Pilate saw that he prevailed nothing, but rather

that a tumult was arising, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, ⁸I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, ⁹His blood be on us and our children. And ¹⁰Pilate, wishing to content the multitude, delivered Him to be scourged and crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the judgment hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band. And Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And ¹¹the soldiers stripped Jesus, and put on Him a scarlet robe, and plaited a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they kneeled down before Him, and worshiped Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spat upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head and struck Him in the face.

And Pilate went out again, and saith unto them, Behold I bring Him out to you, that ye may know that I find no crime in Him. Then came Jesus out, wearing a crown of thorns, and the purple garment. And Pilate saith unto them, ¹²Behold the man! When the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify Him, crucify Him. Pilate saith unto them, Take Him yourselves and crucify Him; for I find no crime in Him. The Jews answered him, ¹³We have a law, and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God. If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend: every one that maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar. ¹⁴When Pilate therefore heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat, and saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, ¹⁵Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar. ¹⁶Then delivered he Him to be crucified.

¹ What was Pilate wont to do at the feast?

² What prisoners had he at that time?

³ What did Pilate say to the Jews?

⁴ What message did Pilate receive from Procula, his wife?

⁵ For which one of the two did the Jews ask release?

⁶ What did Pilate say in his perplexity?

⁷ What did the multitude cry out then?

⁸ What did Pilate say?

⁹ What did the multitude cry out once more?

¹⁰ What did Pilate finally do to please the Jews?

¹¹ How did the soldiers mock Jesus?

- ¹² What did Pilate say when he brought Jesus out before the people?
¹³ What did the Jews say, when Pilate declared again that Jesus was innocent?
¹⁴ What did Pilate do now?
¹⁵ What did the Jews cry out once more?
¹⁶ What was done then?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Pilate was fully convinced of the innocence of Jesus, and tried continually to release Him; but he wanted to do this without impairing his standing with the Jews.

2. He who tries simply to please men will easily disregard justice, duty and conscience, and will prove himself an enemy of God and righteousness.

3. I, and you, and all fallen children of men are Barabbas. The innocent one is condemned; the guilty ones escape. Jesus was condemned by a temporal judge, just for the purpose of delivering us from the severe judgment of God, to which we were exposed.

Cruel hands of sinners bound Thee,
 Thou a sinful world hast freed;
 They with thorns and mockery crowned Thee,
 Placing in Thy hands a reed;
 Now a starry crown Thou wearest,
 Heavenly King, Almighty Lord;
 Scepter of the world Thou bearest,
 And by angels art adored.

57. THE CRUCIFIXION.

Matt 27: 31 ss. Mark 15: 20 ss. Luke 23: 26 ss. John 19: 16 ss.

¹After they had mocked Him, they took off from Him the purple robe and put on Him His own garments, and led Him away to crucify Him. And He bare His cross. And ²when they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, and laid on him the cross, to bear it after Jesus. And there followed Him a great multitude of people, and of women, who bewailed and lamented Him. But Jesus turning unto them said, ³Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to

the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? ⁴And there were also two others, malefactors, led with Him to be put to death.

⁵And when they came unto the place called The skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha, they gave Him vinegar to drink mingled with gall (myrrh and wine): and when He had tasted it, He would not drink. ⁶There they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, and Jesus in the midst. And ⁷the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And He was numbered with the transgressors. And it was the third hour when they crucified Him.

And Pilate wrote a superscription, and put it on the cross; and there was written, ⁸Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews. This superscription was read by many Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city. And it was written in Hebrew, and in Greek, and in Latin. The chief priests of the Jews therefore said to Pilate, ⁹Write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am the King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. ¹⁰The soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also the coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore one to another, ¹¹Let us not rend it but cast lots for it, whose shall it be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, ¹²They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. These things the soldiers did.

¹ How did Jesus begin His walk to Golgotha (Calvary)?

² Whom did they compel to help Jesus to carry the cross?

³ What did Jesus do to the lamenting women that followed him?

⁶ What took place now on Golgotha?

⁴ Who else was led out with Him?

⁵ What stupefying drink did they want to give Him?

⁶ What took place now on Golgotha?

⁷ What Scripture was fulfilled thereby?

⁸ What superscription did Pilate put on the cross of Jesus?

⁹ What did the Jews say to Pilate about it?

¹⁰ What did the soldiers do now?

¹¹ What did they say about His coat that was without a seam?

¹² Repeat the Scripture in which this had been prophesied.

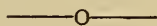
APPLICATIONS.

1. "Take off thy shoes!" here is holy ground, consecrated by the atoning blood of the God-man, Jesus. No man is able "to search out, to think out and to speak out" this sacred story. Sink yourself in mind deeper and deeper into it.

2. Simon of Cyrene, whom Mark (Chap. 15: 21) knew as the father of Alexander and Rufus, takes the place of Simon Peter, who failed to appear on time, in spite of his promise. If you do not come when the Lord calls you, then another will come.

3. Oh, how great is the hatred of infidelity against Jesus! They try to rob Him, not only of His life, but also of His legitimate honors. But "What I have written, I have written," applies to God's words also.

O sacred Head, now wounded,
 With grief and shame weighed down;
 Now scornfully surrounded
 With thorns, Thy only crown;
 O sacred Head, what glory,
 What bliss, till now, was Thine!
 Yet, though despised and gory,
 I joy to call Thee mine.



58. THE SEVEN WORDS OF JESUS ON THE CROSS.

Matt. 27: 31, 32. Mark 15: 20, 21. Luke 23: 46. John 19: 26, 27.

When they had crucified Jesus, He cried out and said, ¹Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.— And they that passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads, and saying, ²Ha, Thou, that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself. If Thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross. In like manner also the chief priests mocking Him, with the scribes and elders, said, ³He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe on Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He desireth Him. For He said, I am the Son of God. But ⁴there were standing by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, ⁵Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, ⁶Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her

unto his own house. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, ⁷If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us. But the other answered, and rebuking him, said, ⁸Dost thou not even fear God, seeing that thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, ⁹Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, ¹⁰Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. And it was now about the sixth hour (12 o'clock), and a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour (3 o'clock). And the sun was darkened. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, ¹¹Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by when they heard, said, He calleth Elias. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, ¹²I thirst. There was set there a vessel full of vinegar. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and put it to His mouth. And the rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias cometh to take Him down. When Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, ¹³It is finished. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, and said, ¹⁴Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit! He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

¹⁵And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And the earth did quake, and the rocks were rent; and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept came out of the tombs after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now the centurion, which stood over against Him, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, when they saw the earthquake, and the things that were done, feared exceedingly, saying, ¹⁶Certainly this was a righteous man, and the Son of God. And all the multitudes that came together to this sight, when they beheld the things, that were done, returned smiting their breasts. ¹⁷And many women were there beholding from afar, which had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto Him: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. And many other women, which came up with Him

unto Jerusalem; and all His acquaintance stood afar off, seeing these things.

- ¹ How did Jesus pray for His tormentors even on the cross?
- ² How did the rabble rail at Him?
- ³ How did the chief men of the Jews taunt Him?
- ⁴ Who of His friends stood near His cross?
- ⁵ What did He say to His grief-stricken mother?
- ⁶ What did He say to John, the "disciple whom He loved?"
- ⁷ How did the impenitent malefactor revile Him?
- ⁸ How did the other, the penitent malefactor, rebuke Him?
- ⁹ What did he say to Jesus?
- ¹⁰ What comforting reply did he receive?
- ¹¹ What did Jesus cry out at the ninth hour?
- ¹² What did He say when He knew that all was finished?
- ¹³ What did He do when he had taken some vinegar?
- ¹⁴ How did He pray at last with a loud voice?
- ¹⁵ What miracles took place when Jesus died?
- ¹⁶ What did the centurion and others say, when they saw these signs?
- ¹⁷ Who else was near and saw all these things?

APPLICATIONS.

1. O wonderful love, that even when dying prays for murderers, provides for relatives and pardons repentant sinners! And for us it is often so hard, oh, so hard, to forgive the least insults, and to provide in faithful love, and in days of health for our own!

2. You can see here at the cross whether Jesus loves you with all His heart. For "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "Ye are my friends," saith Jesus, "if ye do the things which I command you."

3. Since Jesus died for us we can now be saved in death. He hath broken off the sting of death, and carried away sin, and re-opened the portals of life. Our death is the entering into eternal life.

O Thou Majesty divine!
 Jesus, on that cross of Thine!
 Who can prove his love to Thee
 By such test of agony?
 From Thy cross, uplifted high,
 O Beloved, cast Thine eye:
 Turn me to Thee, heart and soul;
 By Thy sorrows make me whole.

59. THE BURIAL OF JESUS.

Matt. 27. Mark 15. Luke 23. John 19.

¹The Jews therefore, because it was the Preparation, that the bodies should not remain on the cross upon the Sabbath, for the day of that Sabbath was a high day, asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers therefore came, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him. ²But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and straightway there came out blood and water.

And at even, because it was the Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, there came ³Joseph of Arimathæa, an honorable counsellor, and a good and just man, who had not consented to their counsel and deed, and was himself a disciple of Jesus (but secretly for fear of the Jews, and who also himself was waiting for the kingdom of God), and went in boldly unto Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴Pilate marveled if He were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead. And when he learned it of the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen cloth, and took Him down.

And ⁵there came also Nicodemus, he who at the first came to Jesus by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. So ⁶they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. ⁷Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, which Joseph had hewn out in the rock, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus because of the Jews' Preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. ⁸And they rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. And the Sabbath drew on.

And ⁹the women, which had come with Him out of Galilee, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. And they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath day they rested according to the commandment. Now on the morrow, which is the day after the Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered together unto Pilate,

saying, ¹⁰We remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest haply His disciples come, and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: and the last error will be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, ¹¹Ye have a guard: go your way, and make it as sure as ye can. So ¹²they went, and made the sepulchre sure, setting a guard, and sealing the stone,

¹ What did the Jews ask of Pilate?

² Why did the soldiers not break the legs of Jesus?

³ Who asked Pilate for the body of Jesus?

⁴ With what success?

⁵ Who assisted Joseph of Arimathæa?

⁶ What did they do together?

⁷ Where did they take the body of Jesus?

⁸ How did they close the sepulchre?

⁹ Who else was present at the burial?

¹⁰ What did the chief men of the Jews say to Pilate?

¹¹ What did Pilate answer them?

¹² What did they do then?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Jesus was by no means in a trance. The soldiers and their centurion made an official report to Pilate, that He had died; but also His pierced side, from which blood and water flowed, establishes His death beyond all doubt.

2. Even now the fruit of the atoning death of Jesus begins to blossom. Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathæa, who had heretofore only been secret disciples of Jesus, come forward and declare themselves freely and publicly for the reviled Nazarene.

3. Divine providence is revealed also in the death of Jesus. They had intended to make His grave with the wicked; but with the rich was He in His death.

So Jesus slept; God's dying Son

Passed through the grave and blessed the bed!

Rest here, blest saint, till from His throne

The morning break, and pierce the shade.

—O—

60. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

Matt. 28. Mark 16. Luke 24. John 20.

¹And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices that they

might come and anoint Him. And they came on the first day of the week very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun, unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they were saying among themselves, ²Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And, behold, there was a great earthquake. For ³an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And ⁴for fear the watchers did quake, and became as dead men.

And when the women looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. Then Mary Magdalene runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, ⁵They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre and we know not where they have laid Him. And they (the women) entered into the sepulchre, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And while they were perplexed thereabout, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, arrayed in a long white robe. And, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And they were afrighted, and bowed down their faces.

And the angel said unto the women, ⁶Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth which hath been crucified. Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here. He is risen, even as He said. Come; see the place where the Lord lay; and go quickly, and tell His disciples and Peter. And, lo, He will go before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him. ⁷Remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered His words. ⁸And they went out from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word; and they said not anything to any man; for they were afraid.

⁹Then Peter went forth, and the other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. And they ran both together: and the other disciple outran Peter, and came first to the sepulchre, and looking in seeth the linen cloths lying; yet went he not in. ¹⁰Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and he beholdeth the linen cloths lying, and the napkin,

that was upon His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but rolled up in a place by itself. Then went in also the other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed: for as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. ¹²Then the disciples went away again.

¹ Who were the first ones to visit the sepulchre of Jesus?

² What did they say among themselves on the way?

³ What occurred in the meanwhile?

⁴ How did this affect the watchers?

⁵ What did Mary Magdalene say to Peter and John?

⁶ What did the other women do, and what did they see?

⁷ What did the angel say unto them?

⁸ Of what did he remind them especially?

⁹ What did the affrighted women do then?

¹⁰ Which ones of the disciples hastened then to the sepulchre?

¹¹ In what order were the burial cloths laid?

¹² What else is said of the disciples?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Truth, like God Himself, is immortal. Although it be attacked, and violated, and nailed to the cross, and buried, yet it will rise again like Jesus, the absolute Truth. Destroy this temple, and — John 2: 19.

2. A bad conscience awakens fear and apprehension; hence the Jews take all kinds of precautionary measures; they seal the stone and place a guard around the sepulchre to prevent the defeat they fear; but the (supposed) foolishness of God is wiser than men (1 Cor. 1: 25).

3. The Holy Spirit had a special end in view when He caused a record to be made of this beautiful action of the holy women, who were the last at the cross and the first at the sepulchre. It extols womanly piety and is an example for Christian womanhood.

4. The blessing of the resurrection of Christ cannot be described; for thereby He has overcome death, and received the testimony from the Father, that His sacrifice for our reconciliation has been accepted. Secondly, we are now by His power raised up to a new life, and finally, the resurrection of Christ is to us a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection.

The Lord of Life is risen,
 And love no longer grieves;
 In ruin lies death's prison,
 Sing, heralds, Jesus lives.
 We hear Thy blessed greeting;
 Salvation's work is done!
 We worship Thee, repeating:
 "Life for the dead is won!"

61. JESUS APPEARS UNTO MARY AND THE DISCIPLES.

Matt. 28. Mark 16. Luke 24. John 20.

¹Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven devils, was standing without at the sepulchre weeping. And as she wept, she looked into the sepulchre, and she beholdeth two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. ²When she had thus said, she turned herself back, and beholdeth Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou, whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir if Thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. ³Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turneth herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith to her, ⁴Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto my Father: but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and my God and your God.

And as they (those who were with Mary) went to tell His disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and took hold of His feet, and worshiped Him. Then saith Jesus unto them, ⁵Fear not: go tell my brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

Now while they were going, behold, ⁶some of the guard came into the city, and told unto the chief priests all the things that were come to pass. And ⁷when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, ⁸Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught.

Mary Magdalene cometh and telleth the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her, And ⁹they, when they heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, disbelieved. And their words seemed unto them as idle tales, and they believed them not. ¹⁰Thereafter, yet on the same day, Jesus was seen of Cephas (Simon Peter).

- ¹ What else does the evangelist report of Mary?
- ² For whom did she take the risen Jesus?
- ³ How did Jesus make Himself known, and how does she call Him?
- ⁴ What did Jesus say unto Mary?
- ⁵ What did Jesus say in the meanwhile unto His disciples, when He met them?
- ⁶ What occurred when the disciples went on?
- ⁷ What did the chief priests do?
- ⁸ What were the watchers to say, who had been bribed?
- ⁹ How did the disciples receive Mary's message?
- ¹⁰ To whom did Jesus appear on the same day?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Like Mary, I, too, have sometimes mistaken Jesus for another than He is; or have believed that some one had taken Him away, or have sought help, and counsel, and consolation from the dead; but when He again called me by my name, I fell at His feet and exclaimed joyously, *Rabboni*.

2. Yes, the last error becomes worse than the first, but on the side of the deceitful rulers of the Jews. Money, much money, is placed into the hands of the watchers, and a monstrous lie upon their tongue. Such cunning is, indeed, too threadbare.

3. Be not surprised, that the disciples were so slow to understand and to believe the great prophecies of Christ's kingdom, of His work, office, suffering and resurrection; they had not such abundant historical evidence before them, as I and you have. And yet, are you more ready to discern and believe divine things than they were?

Our hearts, be pure from evil,
Then we may see aright
The Lord in rays eternal
Of resurrection light.

62. THE DISCIPLES THAT WENT TO EMMAUS.

Mark 16. Luke 24.

¹After that He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked on their way into the country. And, behold, two of them were going that very day to a village called Emmaus, which was threescore furlongs from Jerusalem. And they communed with each other of all these things which had happened. And ²it came to pass, while they communed together, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. And

He said unto them, ³What communications are these that ye have one with another, and are sad? And one of them named Cleopas, answering said unto Him, ⁴Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, ⁵The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we hoped that it was He who should redeem Israel. And beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. ⁶Moreover certain women of our company amazed us, having been early at the sepulchre: and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them that were with us went to the sepulchre and found it even as the women had said: but Him they saw not.

And Jesus said unto them, ⁷O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Behooved it not the Christ to suffer all these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. And they drew nigh unto the village whither they were going: and ⁸He made as though He would go further. And they constrained Him, saying, ⁹Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And He went in to abide with them. And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took the bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And ¹⁰their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, ¹¹Did not our heart burn within us, while He spake to us in the way, while He opened to us the scriptures? And ¹²they rose up that very hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, ¹³The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And ¹⁴they told the things that happened in the way, and how He was known of them in the breaking of the bread.

¹ In what manner did Jesus reveal Himself further?

² What came to pass while they were speaking of these things?

³ How did the supposed stranger speak to them?

- ⁴ What was the reply Cleopas made?
- ⁵ What did he relate in answer to the question "What things?"
- ⁶ What was his remark in reference to the report of the resurrection?
- ⁷ What was the Lord's reply?
- ⁸ What did He do when they came near the village of Emmaus?
- ⁹ What did the two disciples ask Him to do?
- ¹⁰ What occurred, when Jesus sat at the table with them and broke the bread?
- ¹¹ Repeat the remarks they made when Jesus disappeared.
- ¹² Where did they go the same evening?
- ¹³ Give the words of greeting of the eleven.
- ¹⁴ What did the two relate to them?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The resurrection of Jesus was a fact so great and glorious, that the disciples at first were unable to believe it; yet they spoke among themselves of the things that had taken place.

2. The Lord is always near to him and will make his heart burn within him and reveal Himself to him, who cleaves to the word of God and speaks reverently of the great mysteries of faith (John 14: 21).

3. The request of the disciples of Emmaus, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening," is a prayer for Christians at all times. Oh, what are we, if the Lord does not abide with us, if evening is drawing nigh in our heart, in our home, in our congregation, and in the hour of death!

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide:
The darkness deepens; Lord! with me abide;
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless! Oh, abide with me!

63. JESUS APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES AND TO THOMAS.

Luke 24. John 20.

¹The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, and they were speaking of these things, Jesus revealed Himself unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and came and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But ²they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit. And He said unto them, Why are

ye troubled? and wherefore do reasonings arise in your heart? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye behold me having. And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here anything to eat? And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honeycomb; and He took it, and did eat before them. Then said Jesus to them again, ⁵Peace be unto you. As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye forgive they are forgiven unto them: whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus (twin), was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, ⁶Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe. ⁷And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the door being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas, ⁸Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto Him, ⁹My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, ¹⁰Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

¹ How did Jesus reveal Himself unto the eleven?

² What impression did His appearance make upon them?

³ What did the Lord say?

⁴ What was the result when the disciples saw the Lord?

⁵ What else did Jesus say unto them?

⁶ Repeat the remark Thomas made when they said, "We have seen the Lord."

⁷ What happened after eight days?

⁸ What did Jesus say to Thomas?

⁹ What did he exclaim?

¹⁰ What did Jesus say to him then?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Behold, the disciples held their meetings behind locked doors "for fear of the Jews." Do tell us, ye deniers of the resurrection of Jesus, and of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, how these timid men became the heroic conquerors of the world!

2. Efforts are made to weaken this testimony of the disciples, by declaring that they were credulous men, and enthusiasts. History proves just the contrary; it was hard for them to believe. Listen to Thomas! (Compare John 24: 25, and many other passages.)

3. To demand a tangible proof, a proof perceptible by the senses, in order to believe, is in itself a dangerous degree of unbelief; it is not unreasonable. For I no longer need to believe what I see. The story of Thomas proves, however, that the Lord is willing to meet honest doubters and to grant them faith.

Yes! I believe; and only Thou
Canst give my soul relief;
Lord, to Thy truth my spirit bow;
"Help Thou mine unbelief!"

64. JESUS AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

John 21.

After these things Jesus manifested Himself to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. He manifested Himself on this wise. ¹There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebidee, and two other of His disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. ²They went forth and entered into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. ³But when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the beach: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye aught to eat? They answered Him, No. And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. ⁴Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him (for he was naked), and cast himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from the land, but

about two hundred cubits off), dragging the net full of fishes. When they got out upon the land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, ³Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, one hundred and fifty and three. And for all there were so many, the net was not rent. Jesus saith unto them, Come and break your fast. ⁶And none of the disciples durst inquire of Him, Who art thou? knowing it was the Lord. Jesus cometh, and taketh the bread, and giveth them, and the fish likewise.

When they had broken their fast, Jesus saith unto Simon Peter, ⁷Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto Him, ⁸Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto him again a second time, ⁹Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Tend my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto Him, ¹⁰Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, ¹¹Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. ¹²Now this He spake, signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow me.

¹ To which disciples did Jesus manifest Himself at the sea of Tiberias?

² What did they do now, being fishermen?

³ How did Jesus manifest Himself to them, and what did He say?

⁴ What did Peter do when John exclaimed, It is the Lord?

⁵ What did Jesus say unto them when they had landed?

⁶ Did the disciples recognize Him?

⁷ What did Jesus say to Peter after they had finished eating?

⁸ What was his reply?

⁹ What did the Lord say a second, and a third time unto him?

¹⁰ What was Peter's third reply?

¹¹ What did Jesus say to him then?

¹² Why did Jesus say it?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The fishermen returned to their nets, to their former vocation; thereby was fulfilled what the Lord had prophesied, "Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own" (John 16: 30). Never be found in that which is your own, but in that which is your heavenly Father's.

2. How remarkably the thoughts of man become his accusers. When the brethren of Joseph were sorely tried they said, in their fear, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." Thus the threefold question of Jesus reminded Peter of his threefold denial of his Master. Have you never said unto yourself, when in great tribulation, "You were the fault of this yourself then and there?"

3. Jesus took Peter into a very severe examination. Its object was to show the genuineness of his repentance, to secure for him his former standing with his brethren and to assign to him anew the apostolic office which he had forfeited. Having learned by bitter experience, he says not that he loved the Lord more than the others; he has been cured of his unseemly self-confidence.

I will love Thee,—all my treasure!
 I will love Thee,—all my strength!
 I will love Thee,—without measure,
 And will love Thee right at length.
 Oh, I will love Thee, Light divine,
 Till I die and call Thee mine.

65. THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

Matt. 28. Mark 16. Luke 24. Acts 1.

¹But the eleven disciples went unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And there were gathered there more than five hundred brethren (1 Cor. 15:6). And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake to them, saying, ²All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be damned. And ³these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues, take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.

They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. And, 'lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

⁵Jesus showed Himself to His disciples forty days, speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God. And, being assembled together with them (for the last time in Jerusalem), He commanded them, that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said He, ye heard from me. Behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you. But ⁶tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be clothed with power from on high. For John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. They that were come together, asked Him, saying, Lord, dost Thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel? And He said unto them, ⁷It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set in His own power; but ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And ⁸He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. ⁹And it came to pass, while He blessed them, as they were looking up, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight, and was carried up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

And ¹⁰while they were looking into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, ¹¹Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven. And ¹²they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy from the mount called Olivet, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.

¹ Where did a large number of disciples see Jesus again?

² What did Jesus say to the eleven?

³ What signs were to accompany their preaching?

⁴ What special promise did He give?

⁵ How long did Jesus tarry with His disciples after His resurrection?

⁶ Where were they to assemble for the last time?

⁷ What was the reply of Jesus to their question, when He would restore the kingdom of God?

⁸ Where did Jesus lead them now?

⁹ What came to pass, while He blessed them?

¹⁰ Whom did the disciples see when Jesus ascended into heaven?

¹¹ What did the angels say to them?

¹² What did the disciples do now?

APPLICATIONS.

1. To be permitted to see Jesus with the physical eye was indeed a great favor, but the joy of seeing soon came to an end.

2. Those receive a still greater favor, who believe in Jesus and love Him, without seeing Him. At some time they shall see Him forever, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory (1 John 3: 2. 1 Pet. 1: 8).

3. The last command, "Preach the Gospel," and the last promise, "I am with you alway," which Jesus left to His own, are in force to-day; they stand like a pair of great and noble columns at the portals of His kingdom.

4. The wonderful circuit has been completed. When alluding to His ascension, Jesus Himself declared, "I came out from the Father and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father" (John 16: 28).

5. What a consolation for believers that Christ is their advocate in the presence of His Father, and that they have in His ascension a sure pledge, that He as the Head, will also take them, His members, up to Himself (Rom. 8: 34).

We, O Lord, with hearts adoring,
Follow Thee beyond the sky;
Hear our prayers Thy grace imploring,
Lift our souls to Thee on high.

66. THE FIRST CHRISTIAN PENTECOST.

Acts 2.

When the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place in Jerusalem. And ¹suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And ²there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as fire (small flames). And it sat upon each one of them. ³And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews from every nation under heaven. And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and

were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, 'Behold, are not all these which speak Galilæans? And how hear we every man in our own language wherein we are born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, in Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God. And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this? 'But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine.

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, 'Ye men of Judæa, these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing that it is but the third hour of the day (9 o'clock in the morning). But it is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh. 'Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs, which God did by Him, in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know, Him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Him God raised up. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this which ye see and hear. 'Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, 'Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. "They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. ¹²And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. They sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, praising God, with gladness and

singleness of heart, and having favor with all the people.
¹³And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.

- ¹ What occurred when the disciples were all together?
- ² What appeared at the same time?
- ³ What was the effect of this wonderful manifestation?
- ⁴ What did the multitude say that was attracted by this miracle?
- ⁵ What did the scoffers say?
- ⁶ How did Peter answer them?
- ⁷ How did he explain this manifestation?
- ⁸ What was his testimony before all the people concerning Christ?
- ⁹ Being convinced, what did they say?
- ¹⁰ What was Peter's answer?
- ¹¹ What was the result of Peter's first sermon?
- ¹² What can you say of the observances of this, the first Christian church?
- ¹³ What blessing was the result?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If the divine Spirit is to gain room and to work unhindered, man must heed the word of God, and continue in prayer, and the meetings must be "of one accord."

2. The visible and audible signs at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit were like bells with which God called together the first Pentecostal assembly; they were also impressive symbols of the manifold operation of His Spirit.

3. On account of man's sin, there was a confusion of tongues at Babel; through the gift of the Holy Spirit a limit was set to this confusion, and, in a measure, their unity restored, as a sign that Christ's kingdom is to unite the nations of all languages.

4. If the minister is full of faith and the Holy Spirit, the word will pierce the hearts of the hearers and work repentance, although some of them may scoff.

5. It is not always the fault of the minister, if a congregation is wanting in blessings and prosperity. The first church continued in all good things; it was benevolent, it was with one accord in the temple, it rejoiced in God, and the Lord added daily such as should be saved.

Holy Ghost, Divine Creator,
 Who didst on the waters move;
 Holy Ghost, Regenerator,
 Author of all life and love;
 Holy Ghost, Illuminator.
 Who didst then with fire baptize;
 Holy Ghost, great Renovator,
 Come, the world evangelize.

67. PETER HEALS A LAME MAN.

Acts 3, 4.

Now Peter and John were going up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And ¹a certain man that was lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple. ²When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, ³Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up, and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up. And ⁴immediately his feet and anklebones received strength; and leaping up he stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

When Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, ⁵Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? Or why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified His Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before Pilate. But the Prince of Life, whom ye killed, God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And by faith in His name hath given this man whom ye see and know, this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. ⁶And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.

⁷And the priests laid hands on them, and put them in ward. And on the morrow their rulers assembled, and set them in the midst and inquired, ⁸By what power, or in what name have ye done this? Then ⁹Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, doth this man stand here

before you whole. And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name given among men, wherein we must be saved. ¹⁰When they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, they marveled. And the charged them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered, ¹¹Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard. ¹²And they, when they had further threatened them, let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for they all glorified God for that which was done.

¹ Whom did Peter and John meet at the door of the temple?

² For what did the lame man ask?

³ What did Peter say to him?

⁴ What happened, when Peter took him by the hand?

⁵ What did Peter say to the wondering people?

⁶ How did Peter end his speech?

⁷ What did the priests do with the two disciples?

⁸ What did the rulers ask them the next morning?

⁹ What was the reply of the disciples?

¹⁰ What did the rulers say now?

¹¹ What did Peter and John answer them?

¹² How did the rulers dismiss them?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Never neglect to attend worship, and if it were only a prayer-meeting; you know not what blessing you will receive, or give to others.

2. What a power there is in the holy name of Jesus! Not only a born cripple is healed in the name of Jesus, but in it, and in it alone, is salvation for the whole world.

3. How wonderfully the courage of the disciples of Jesus grew, after they were fully convinced of His resurrection, and had received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They speak the truth fearlessly in the face of dungeon and bonds, and reply to all threats, "We cannot but speak."

O Spirit of the Lord. prepare
All the round earth her God to meet;
Breathe Thou abroad like morning air,
Till hearts of stone begin to beat.

68. ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.

Acts 4: 32; 5: 11.

And ¹the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common. And ²with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and ³as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of these things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each according as anyone had need.

But ⁴a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, ⁵Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And ⁶Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost. And a great fear came upon all that heard it.

And the young men arose, and wrapped him round, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, ⁷Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, ⁸Yea, for so much? But Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door; and they shall carry thee out. And ⁹she fell down immediately at his feet, and gave up the ghost. And the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all that heard it.

¹ How intimate was the union of the first Christians?

² What is reported of the apostles?

³ What did they do with their property?

⁴ What did one of them do?

⁵ What did Peter say to him about this dishonesty?

⁶ What followed upon the words of Peter?

⁷ What were Peter's words to the wife of Ananias, when she came in?

⁸ What was her reply?

⁹ What did Peter say then?

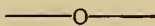
¹⁰ What took place after Peter's remark?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The example of the first Christians in respect to communism of property was by no means a standard for later times. Having their property in common was caused by the unfavorable condition of the affairs of that day, and was voluntary.

2. Wherever believers are intimately united with each other and have received grace, evil cannot make headway nor receive sanction. Punishment of the same awakens fear and aversion.

Forgive my follies past,
The crimes which I have done;
Bid a repenting sinner live,
Through Thine Incarnate Son.



69. STEPHEN IS STONED TO DEATH.

Acts 6, 7.

The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples increased and multiplied in Jerusalem. And a great number of priests were obedient to the faith. And ¹Stephen, one of the seven deacons, full of faith and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people. But there arose certain ones disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. ²Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God; and they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and seized him, and brought him into the council; and ³all that sat in the council, looking on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. And the high priest said, Are these things so?

And ⁴Stephen defended himself in a long speech and spoke of that, which the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, had done for their fathers, and how their fathers had always resisted the will of God; finally he said, ⁵Ye stiff-necked, ye do

always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them which shewed before the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers: ye who received the law, and have not kept it. ⁶Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth.

But ⁷he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. ⁸But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord, and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul; and they stoned Stephen, calling and saying, ⁹Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him. ¹⁰But Saul was pleased with his death.

¹ What is reported of Stephen in this story?

² What did some men do who were not able to withstand him?

³ What impression did his appearance make upon the councillors?

⁴ What was Stephen's reply to the false accusations?

⁵ What did he say at last?

⁶ How was his speech received?

⁷ What did Stephen see and say?

⁸ What did his enemies do now?

⁹ What did Stephen cry out when they stoned him?

¹⁰ What is said of Saul, who was present?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It is a plain proof that a person is defending a good cause, if his opponents try to overcome his superior strength of mind by falsehood, mockery, and force.

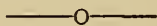
2. Those become beautiful and angel-like people, who are filled with the Holy Spirit and are ever determined to stand up for their Saviour, to live and die for Him.

3. The innocent children of Bethlehem, whom Herod murdered, were the first but unconscious Christian martyrs; Stephen, however, was the first conscious one.

4. It is a noteworthy fact that here we meet Saul — afterwards

Paul — for the first time in sacred history. How wonderful are the leadings of the divine grace of God. The same man who had taken part in the stoning of Stephen and was pleased with it, himself at last dies for Jesus.

Jesus, Thou Christ of God,
 By Thy perennial word
 Lead us where Thou hast trod,
 Make our faith strong.



70. THE CHAMBERLAIN FROM ETHIOPIA.

Acts. 8.

And ¹there arose in that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. ²But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. ³They that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.

But an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, ⁴Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza. And he arose and went. And behold, ⁵a man of Ethiopia, a chamberlain of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem for to worship; and he was returning, and sitting in his chariot, and was reading Isaiah the prophet.

And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, ⁶Understandest thou what thou redest? And he said, ⁷How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the place of the scripture which he was reading was this, ⁸“He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb dumb before his shearer.” (Isa. 53.) And the chamberlain answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? And ⁹Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus.

And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain

water: and the chamberlain saith, ¹⁰See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, ¹¹If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, ¹²I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. ¹³And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. Then the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the chamberlain saw him no more: and ¹⁴he went on his way rejoicing.

¹ What arose at this time in Jerusalem?

² Who was especially active in this persecution?

³ What did those do that had been scattered?

⁴ What did an angel of the Lord say unto Philip?

⁵ Who met him as he went?

⁶ What did Philip say to the chamberlain?

⁷ What was his reply?

⁸ What passage in Isaiah was he reading?

⁹ What did Philip do at the chamberlain's request?

¹⁰ What did the chamberlain now say to Philip?

¹¹ What was Philip's answer?

¹² Give the chamberlain's confession.

¹³ What did Philip do on the strength of this?

¹⁴ And what is said of the chamberlain?

APPLICATIONS.

1. If you strike into a fire with a stick, the sparks will fly in all directions, and every spark will kindle a new fire; thus it was with the persecution of the Christians.

2. Here you can see that a higher, invisible hand directs everything, and that nothing depends on blind chance. The meeting of Philip and the chamberlain was according to divine disposition.

3. Once more a devout heathen, and this time one from far away Ethiopia, receives instruction in the word of God, confesses his faith in Jesus Christ, is baptized, and goes home rejoicing. Jesus makes happy and noble people.

Love of God, so pure and changeless,

Blood of Christ, so rich, so free;

Grace of God, so strong and boundless;

Magnify it all in me.



71. THE CONVERSION OF PAUL THE APOSTLE.

Acts 9.

But ¹Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And ²as he journeyed and came near Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven. And he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, ³Who art thou, Lord? The Lord said, ⁴I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And Paul, trembling and astonished, said, ⁵Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, ⁶Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened he saw nothing. And ⁷they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, ⁸Ananias, go to the street which is called the Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and he hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. But Ananias answered, ⁹Lord, I have heard how much evil he did to Thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the high priests to bind all that call upon Thy name. The Lord said unto him, ¹⁰Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me. And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, ¹¹Brother Saul, the Lord hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And ¹²straightway there fell from his eyes, as it were, scales: and he received his sight; and he arose, and was baptized; and he took food and was strengthened. And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus that He is the Son of God.

¹ What do we hear of Saul now?

- ² What happened to him on the way to Damascus?
- ³ What did the voice reply, when he inquired, Who art Thou?
- ⁴ What did the trembling and astonished Saul say?
- ⁵ What command did the Lord give him?
- ⁶ What did the men that were with him do now?
- ⁷ What did the Lord say unto Ananias in a vision?
- ⁸ What was his reply?
- ⁹ What did the Lord command him to do?
- ¹⁰ How did Ananias address Saul when he came into the house?
- ¹¹ What happened to Saul now, and what did he do?

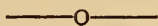
APPLICATIONS.

1. Boast not so much of your power, ye mighty ones of the world! There dwelleth One in heaven who is mightier than all of you, and He saith, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further." And that comes to pass.

2. The conversion of a zealous persecutor of the first Christians is a glorious triumph of divine grace; the lion became a lamb; the proud Pharisee was changed to a humble disciple of Jesus, and the persecutor of His cause to its successful furtherer.

3. Saul's conversion was only apparently sudden. Most suddenly did the decisive moment occur, but who can say what great battle went on in his heart from the time he saw the blessed death of Stephen full of faith, under the stony rain of the Jews, to the day when the Lord cast him to the ground so unawares!

Beautiful Saviour, Lord of the nations
 Son of God and Son of man!
 Glory and honor, praise, adoration,
 Now and for evermore be Thine.



72. CORNELIUS, THE CENTURION.

Acts 10.

¹There was a certain man in Cæsarea, Cornelius by name, a Roman centurion, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision openly about the ninth hour of the day (3 o'clock) an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, ²Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose

house is by the seaside: he will tell thee what thou oughtest to do. And ⁵he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier, and sent them to Joppa.

On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour (12 o'clock noon).

And ⁶he became hungry and desired to eat. But while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and he saw heaven opened and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet let down by four corners upon the earth: Wherein were all manner of unclean beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the heaven. And there came a voice to him, ⁷Rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is unclean. And a voice came unto him a second time, ⁸What God hath cleansed, make thou not common. And this was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

Now while Peter was much perplexed in himself what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood before the gate, and called, and asked whether Peter were lodging there. And the Spirit said unto Peter, ⁹Behold, three men seek thee; but arise, and get thee down, and go with them, nothing doubting: for I have sent them. And Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold I am he whom ye seek; what is the cause wherefore ye are come? And they told him. So he called them in, and lodged them. And ¹⁰on the morrow Peter went with them, and they came to Cæsarea. ¹¹Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his kinsmen and his near friends. And when Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and related what had taken place, and said, Now therefore we are all here present before God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of God.

And Peter opened his mouth, one said, ¹²Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to Him. ¹³The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all) ye know; and we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem. Him they slew

and hanged on a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave Him to be made manifest. And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is He which is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To Him bear all the prophets witness, that through His name every one that believeth on Him, shall receive remission of sins. ¹²While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the Jews which believed were amazed, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

¹ What is said of Cornelius?

² What did an angel say to him in a vision?

³ What did Cornelius do then?

⁴ Describe the vision Peter had the following day.

⁵ What did a voice say to him?

⁶ What did a voice say when he refused to eat anything unclean?

⁷ What did the Spirit say unto him while he was thinking of this vision?

⁸ What did Peter do then?

⁹ How did Cornelius receive him?

¹⁰ What did Peter say?

¹¹ How did he preach Christ unto them?

¹² What occurred after this sermon?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The Lord said to Peter, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." On Pentecost he opened the kingdom of God unto the Jews, and in the house of Cornelius, unto the Gentiles.

2. How difficult it is to overcome religious habits and prejudices! It required a miracle to induce Peter to go to the Gentiles with the message of salvation.

3. The word of the cross manifests its power even in our day, among Jews, heathens, Turks and dead "name-Christians," if it is preached in the power of the Spirit.

Salvation, O salvation!

The joyful sound proclaim,

Till each remotest nation

Has learnt Messiah's name.

73. THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF PAUL
THE APOSTLE.

Acts 13.

Now there were at Antioch, where the disciples were called Christians first, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers. And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, ¹Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ²Then, when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. And ³they came to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they came to the city of Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God.

And ⁴when they had gone through the island unto Paphos, they found a false prophet, a Jew, Bar-jesus: which was with Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, a man of understanding. The same called unto him Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God. But ⁵Bar-jesus, the sorcerer, withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith. But Saul (who is also called Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, fastened his eyes on him, and said, ⁶O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And ⁷immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. ⁸When the proconsul saw what was done, he believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

⁹Paul, and those who were with him, sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, and came to Antioch of Pisidia, and they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, ¹⁰Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. And Paul stood up, and beckoned with the hand and said, ¹¹Men of Israel, hearken; to you is the word of salvation sent, that the Messiah is born of the house of David. Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that forgiveness of sins is proclaimed unto you; every one that believeth in this Jesus is justified. ¹²And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles

besought that these words might be spoken to them. And ¹³as the Gentiles heard them, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of God was spread abroad throughout all the region. But ¹⁴the Jews stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their borders. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium; and the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

¹ What did the Holy Ghost say unto the brethren in Antioch?

² How was this done?

³ Where did these first missionaries go?

⁴ What occurred in the city of Paphos?

⁵ Who resisted them, when they proclaimed the word of God?

⁶ What did Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, say to him?

⁷ What happened then?

⁸ What impression did this miracle make upon the proconsul?

⁹ Where did the missionaries go next?

¹⁰ What word did the rulers of the synagogue send to them?

¹¹ What did Paul now say to them?

¹² What did the Gentiles ask of them?

¹³ How did the Gentiles receive the word?

¹⁴ And what did envious Jews do?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Wherever the spirit and life of Christ dwell in a church, the spirit of missions will soon manifest itself.

2. The sending out of a missionary into a distant country is a solemn act, and is done according to the will and command of God. They fasted, prayed, and ordained them by the laying on of hands; and the Lord called them to such service.

3. The Jews rejected the word of life; the Gentiles received it thankfully and rejoiced. Is it not the same in our time? Many Christians only in name wantonly reject the Gospel, which has become a "light bread" for them, while multitudes of heathen, anxious for their salvation, stretch their hand for the same.

Kingdoms wide that sit in darkness —

Grant them, Lord, the glorious light;

Now from eastern coast to western

May the morning chase the night;

Let redemption, freely purchased, win the day.

74. PAUL AT LYSTRA AND DERBE.

Acts 14.

¹And it came to pass in Iconium, that they so spake in the synagogue, that a great multitude both of Jews and Gentiles believed. Long time, therefore, they tarried there, speaking boldly in the Lord, which bare witness unto the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ²And when there was made an onset, both of the Gentiles and Jews, to entreat them shamefully, and to stone them, they became aware of it, and fled unto the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the region round about: and there they preached the Gospel. And ³at Lystra there sat a certain man, who was lame from his mother's womb; the same heard Paul speaking. And when he saw him, and perceiving that he had faith to be made whole, he said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked. And when the multitudes saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, ⁴The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. And the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and wanted to sacrifice with the people. But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they rent their garments, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, ⁵Sirs, why do ye these things? We are also men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn unto the living God, who made the heaven and the earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.

But ⁶there came Jews thither from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city. And ⁷on the morrow he departed with Barnabas to Lystra and to Iconium, and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. And ⁸they appointed them elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, and commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed. And they

went from there to Antioch, from whence they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled. ⁹And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all the things that God had done with them, and how that He had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles.

¹ What was the result of the work of Paul and his companions in Iconium?

² Where did they go from there on account of persecutions?

³ What miracle did Paul perform there?

⁴ What did the people say, when they saw it?

⁵ What did apostles cry out when the people wanted to bring them sacrifices?

⁶ What happened to Paul then?

⁷ Where did they go now?

⁸ What did they do for the newly organized churches?

⁹ What did they do when they had returned to Antioch?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Agitation and battle ensues where the gospel is preached in its purity and with power.

2. How great must have been the blindness of the Jews, that they as the chosen people of the covenant could show enmity towards the gospel and persecute its ministers, while the gentiles believed gladly.

3. Good order is to prevail in the Church of God, every member is to be in his place and the members to help one another; for this reason the apostle appointed elders in the churches. (Eph. 4: 16.)

The love of Christ unfolding,
Speed on from east to west,
Till all, His cross beholding,
In Him are fully blest.

75. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

Acts 15: 40-16: 22.

But ¹Paul chose Silas, and went forth with him to visit the brethren in every city in which he had preached the word of the Lord. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. And they were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in Asia, and they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, saying,

²Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And when he had seen the vision, straightway he sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called him to preach the Gospel there. ³Then Paul and his companions set sail from Troas to Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia, and preached there the word of the Lord.

⁴And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them, and cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely. He cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in stocks. But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God. And the prisoners were listening to them. And ⁵suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. ⁶And when the jailor awoke out of his sleep and saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, ⁷Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. And he called for lights, and sprang in, and, trembling, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, ⁸Sirs, what must I do to be saved? They said, ⁹Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and he was baptized, he and all his, immediately.

And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let those men go. ¹⁰And they went out of the prison. And when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed. And ¹¹they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and reasoned with them from the scriptures, opening, that it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead: and that this Jesus, whom he preached, was the Christ. And ¹²some of them were persuaded; but the Jews, being moved with jealousy, set the city on an uproar. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea. There they went into the synagogue. ¹³They received the word with all readiness of mind, exam-

ining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was proclaimed of Paul at Berea also, they came thither likewise, stirring up the multitudes.

- ¹ Who accompanied Paul on this missionary journey?
- ² What did a man from Macedonia say to him in a vision?
- ³ Where did he and his companions go now?
- ⁴ What happened to them in Philippi?
- ⁵ What occurred at midnight, when they were praising God in prison?
- ⁶ How did this impress the jailor?
- ⁷ What did Paul cry out aloud to him?
- ⁸ What did the jailer say on his knees?
- ⁹ What answer did he receive?
- ¹⁰ What did Paul and Silas do when they were set free?
- ¹¹ Where did they go from Philippi?
- ¹² What was the result of their preaching in Thessalonica?
- ¹³ How did those of Berea receive the word?
- ¹⁴ What did the Jews do here, too?

APPLICATIONS.

1. The great earthquake and the shaking of the foundations of the prison house were God's loud Amen to the prayers of His maltreated servants.

2. Certainly a supernatural power dwells in the living faith of the Christian, that enables him to endure such tribulation and violence; the apostles could, in addition, even joyously praise God.

3. Paul spoke from his manifold experience, when he wrote to the Christians of Corinth, that the gospel is to some a savor of life unto life, and to others a savor of death unto death. (II Cor. 2: 16.)

Increase my courage, Lord!
 I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
 Supported by Thy Word.

76. PAUL AT ATHENS.

Acts 17.

¹But Paul went to Athens, and he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews, and in the market-place every day with them that met with him. And ²certain philosophers also encountered him, and said, What will this babbler say? He seemeth to be a setter-forth of strange gods: because he preached the gospel of Jesus, and the resurrection. ³And

they took him, and brought him unto the Areopagus (a high place where learned men and statesmen assembled), saying, May we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by thee?

And Paul stood in the midst of the place, and said, ⁴Ye men of Athens, I observed your devotions, and found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I forth unto you. ⁵The God that made the world and all things therein, He, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. And he is not far from each one of us. For in Him we live, move, and have our being, as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring. ⁶And the times of ignorance God overlooked; but now He commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness by the man in whom He hath given assurance, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.

⁷Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: but others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. ⁸But certain men clave unto him, and believed: among whom was Dyonisius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

¹ Where did Paul go from Berea?

² How was he treated by the philosophers?

³ Where did they take him?

⁴ What did he say to them?

⁵ What did he proclaim of the true, but to them, unknown God?

⁶ What application did he make of what he had said?

⁷ What was the result of his speech?

⁸ What was the fruit of his missionary work?

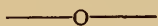
APPLICATIONS.

1. Judge no one unheard. The learned men of Athens looked upon Paul with contempt, and supposed that the plain apostle was a "babbler," and idle talker, but his speech caused them to think.

2. Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "Ye know not what ye worship." The Athenians ignorantly worshiped "the unknown God"; they knew not yet the true God. It is thus today. Many say they know God, but deny it with their works.

3. Repentance before God and faith in Jesus Christ are the main contents of pure evangelical, apostolic preaching; and God demands them from every one.

Lord, incline me to repent;
Let me now my fall lament—
Deeply my revolt deplore,
Weep, believe, and sin no more.



77. PAUL AT CORINTH.

Acts 18.

¹After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; and he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome), and he came to him. And because he was of the same trade, he abode with them and wrought: for by their trade they were tentmakers. And ²he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks. But when Silas and Timotheus came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment, and said unto them, ³Your blood be upon your own heads; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Justus, one that worshiped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And ⁴Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized. And the Lord said unto Paul in the night, by a vision, ⁵Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city.

And ⁶he dwelt there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. ⁷Thereafter he took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; and they came to Ephesus, and he entered the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. And they asked him to abide a longer time. And he consented not; but bade them farewell, saying, ⁸I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return unto you, if God will. ⁹And he set sail from Ephesus and came to Cæsarea; he went up, and saluted the church, and went down to Antioch. And having spent some time there, he departed, and went through

the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

¹ Where did Paul go from Athens?

² What did he do in Corinth?

³ What did he say to the Jews who opposed themselves and blasphemed?

⁴ What was the effect of Paul's preaching on the Gentiles?

⁵ What did the Lord say unto him in a vision?

⁶ How long did Paul remain at Corinth?

⁷ Where did he go then?

⁸ What did he say to the brethren at Ephesus who urged him to stay longer?

⁹ Where did he go from Ephesus?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It is a great encouragement and a treat for a lonely servant of God, when he meets brethren of kindred mind in a foreign land.

2. He who receives a messenger of the Gospel as Aquila and Priscilla did Paul the apostle, will have a sure reward. The Lord said to His disciples, "He that receiveth you receiveth me."

3. Wherever the Lord opens doors for the Gospel, His servants should carry it in at once; He wants to gather there "much people."

4. In God's kingdom we must not only plant, but water also. Paul was intent upon visiting the churches he had planted, and to strengthen the disciples, to encourage and to comfort them.

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

78. PAUL AT EPHESUS.

Acts 18: 11—Chap. 20.

Paul remained one year and six months at Corinth, then he went down to Antioch. Thereafter he came to Ephesus and preached, and taught concerning the kingdom of God. And ¹this continued for the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And ²God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul. So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed.

And about this time there arose no small stir. For ³a cer-

tain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver copies of the celebrated temple of Diana, and brought no little business unto the craftsmen. He called them together and said, 'Sirs, ye know that by this trade we have our wealth. And ye see and hear, that not alone in Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands. And not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be made of no account. 'When they heard this, they were filled with wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with the confusion. And they rushed with one accord unto the theatre. Some cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was in confusion; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together; and they cried out about the space of two hours, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

⁶And when the uproar had ceased for the town clerk had quieted the multitude, Paul called unto him the disciples and took leave of them, and departed for to go into Macedonia; and from there he went to Corinth. And ⁷when Paul had spent three months in Corinth, he hasted to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. And ⁸he entered into a ship and sailed to Syria by Assos, Mitylene, Chios, Trogyllium to Miletus.

⁹And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, ¹⁰I go unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost testifieth unto me in every city saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither hold I my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy; I know that ye shall see my face no more. ¹¹Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears. ¹²And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all. ¹³And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

- ¹ How long did Paul preach at Ephesus?
- ² What was the success of his ministry?
- ³ Who created a disturbance on account of the Gospel?
- ⁴ What did Demetrius say to his craftsmen?
- ⁵ What resulted from his speech?
- ⁶ What did Paul do now?
- ⁷ Where did he intend to go?
- ⁸ What route did he take?
- ⁹ What did he do when he arrived at Miletus?
- ¹⁰ What did he say to the elders of Ephesus?
- ¹¹ What was his final admonition?
- ¹² What beautiful farewell benediction did he leave them?
- ¹³ What impression did he make upon all?

APPLICATIONS.

1. Who are they that attack the Gospel? They are the makers and the worshipers of idols; those who do not like to give up their sins and worldliness. It is thus even in the present day.

2. It is something beautiful, and a special favor of God, when Christian churches are united with such tender yet strong bonds with their pastors, that separation cannot but be accompanied with pain and tears; and separation must come some time.

3. True faith makes heroes and performs miracles. Paul had a definite presentment of his imprisonment in Jerusalem and his impending martyr's death; yet he could not be restrained from going to Jerusalem, because he deemed it his duty. In like manner Luther spake in spite of all objections, "I am summoned to Worms, to Worms will I go."

Saviour, where'er Thy steps I see,
Dauntless, untried, I follow Thee;
Oh, let Thy hand support me still,
And lead me to Thy holy hill!

79. PAUL A PRISONER.

Acts 21-26.

When Paul came to Jerusalem, he went to James; and all the elders were present. And ¹when he had saluted them, he rehearsed one by one the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And ²they, when they heard it, glorified the Lord. But when the Jews from Asia saw Paul in the temple they stirred up all the multitude, and laid hands on him, crying out, ³Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men everywhere against the law,

and this place. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together. ⁴And they took Paul, and drew him of the temple. And straightway the doors were shut. ⁵And as they were seeking to kill him, tidings came up to the chief captain of the band. And forthwith he took soldiers and centurions and ran down upon them. And they, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, left off beating Paul. ⁶Then the chief captain came near, and laid hold on him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and inquired who he was, and what he had done. Some shouted one thing, some another, among the crowd. ⁷And when he could not know the certainty for the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the castle. And he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the crowd. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, Away with him. And Paul was brought into prison. ⁸But in the night the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

⁹And when it was day, more than forty bound themselves under a curse, neither to eat nor to drink till they had killed Paul. ¹⁰But Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, and he came and entered into the castle, and told Paul. And Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath something to tell him. And when the chief captain heard that forty men had conspired to kill Paul, he called unto him two of the centurions, saying, ¹¹Make ready two hundred soldiers, and horsemen three score and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night (9 o'clock in the evening); and provide for them beasts, that they might place Paul thereon, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor; at Cæsarea. This was done. So the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him to Cæsarea and delivered him to the governor. ¹²He kept Paul in prison for two years. And when Paul said, ¹³I appeal unto Cæsar, the governor answered, ¹⁴Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar: unto Cæsar shalt thou go.

¹ What did Paul report to the elders in Jerusalem?

² How was his report received?

³ What did some malevolent Jews from Asia cry out when they saw Paul in the temple?

⁴ What did they do with him?

⁵ Who hindered the Jews from killing him?

- ⁶ What command did the chief captain give?
⁷ Where did he have them take Paul?
⁸ Who stood by him to comfort him?
⁹ What did a number of Jews do now?
¹⁰ How did Paul learn this?
¹¹ What command did the chief captain give when he heard it?
¹² How did the governor treat Paul?
¹³ What did Paul say to Festus, a later governor?
¹⁴ What was Festus' reply?

APPLICATIONS.

1. It requires only a few lying brawlers to cast odium upon an innocent person. The masses of the people follow them blindly.

2. It is very instructive for Christians, that heathens who knew not God had to prevent the Jewish people of the covenant from committing a shameless murder.

3. A nation that turns justice into violence, prepares its own destruction. The proud flourish, the rod is growing green. Soon after these events the city and the temple of the Jews lay in ashes.

4. As early as the days of Paul there were judges that could be bribed. If Paul had given money to Festus, he would have been set free very soon; but Paul was not that kind of man. Be none yourself.

Within Thy presence, Lord,
 Forever I'll abide:
 Thou art the tower of my defense,
 The refuge where I hide.

—O—

80. PAUL'S VOYAGE TOWARDS ROME.

Acts 27, 28.

¹When it was determined that Paul should sail for Rome, they delivered him and certain other prisoners to a centurion named Julius of the Augustan band. And they sailed on the sea. ²And when much time was spent, and the voyage was now dangerous, Paul admonished them to remain, and not to go on. But the centurion believed the master more than the things which were spoken by Paul, and the more part desired to put to sea from thence. But ³after no long time there arose against their purpose a tempestuous wind (whirlwind). And when the ship was caught, and could not face the wind, they gave way to it and were driven. And they feared lest they

should be cast upon the quicksands, they lowered the gear, and were so driven. And ⁴being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship. And the third day they cast out the tackling of the ship.

And when neither sun nor stars appeared in many days, and no small tempest lay on them, all hope of life was taken away. And when they had been long without food, then Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, ⁵Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not to have gotten this injury and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. ⁶For there stood by me this night an angel of the God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee. ⁷Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

And while day was coming on, Paul besought all to take food, saying, ⁸This day is the fourteenth day that ye have taken nothing. Wherefore I beseech you to take some food: for there shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had said this, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of all: and he brake it, and began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and also took food. ⁹And when it was day, they knew not the land: but lighting upon a place where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the foreship stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the stern began to break by the violence of the waves. ¹⁰And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out and escape. But ¹¹the centurion desiring to save Paul, stayed them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: and the rest, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. And it came to pass, that they all escaped safe to the land.

And as they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita (Malta). And ¹²the barbarous people shewed them no common kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received all, because of the rain, and because of the cold. ¹³But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, a viper came out by reason of the heat, and fastened

on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the beast hanging from his hand, they said one to another, ¹⁴No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped from the sea yet vengeance suffereth not to live. ¹⁵And he shook off the beast into the fire, and took no harm. But they expected that he would have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly. ¹⁶But after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they said that he was a god. In the same neighborhood were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who entertained them three days courteously. And the father of Publius lay sick. ¹⁷Paul entered in to him, and prayed, and laying his hands on him, healed him. And when this was done, the rest also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed. And ¹⁸they honored them with many honors; and when they sailed they put on board such things as they needed.

And thus they went toward Rome. And from thence, the brethren, when they heard of them, came to meet them. ¹⁹When Paul saw them he thanked God and took courage. And when they came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard. But Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him. And ²⁰Paul abode two years in Rome, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, with all boldness, none forbidding him.

¹ How did Paul begin his voyage?

² What was his admonition to the sailors?

³ What occurred soon after?

⁴ How did they try to ease the ship?

⁵ What did Paul say to the people on board, when the situation was so hopeless.

⁶ How did Paul know this?

⁷ What special admonition did he give?

⁸ What did he say when day was coming on?

⁹ What happened to the vessel?

¹⁰ What did the soldiers want to do with the prisoners?

¹¹ Why did the centurion not permit it?

¹² How did the inhabitants of the island treat the shipwrecked people?

¹³ What happened to Paul?

¹⁴ What did the barbarians say when they saw it?

¹⁵ But what did Paul do?

¹⁶ What did the people say when Paul neither swelled nor fell down dead?

¹⁷ What did Paul do to the sick father of Publius?

¹⁸ How did the islanders show their gratitude?

¹⁹ How did it affect Paul when brethren came from Rome to meet him?

²⁰ How long did he stay, and what did he do in Rome?

APPLICATIONS.

1. He who is godfearing and does the right has help in God, and finds favor with men when he suffers wrong. Think of Paul, Joseph, David and others.

2. Believers are a blessing for their fellowmen, even if they are humbled and bowed down into the dust. All the people on board the ship were saved by the prayers of Paul and his trust in God.

3. Do you see how contradictory and unreliable is the judgment of the world? The people of Melita called the holy apostle Paul a murderer, a wretched, cruel man, whom vengeance will not permit to live; and in the next moment they declare that he is a god.

4. "Divided trouble is half of trouble; divided joy is doubled joy." O how greatly Paul was strengthened when the sympathizing brethren came from Rome to meet him!

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The God whom we adore,
Be glory, as it was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

EXTRACTS FROM CHURCH HISTORY.

I. TIME OF THE APOSTLES.

From the year 33 to 100 A. D.

Although Christ himself was the founder of His Church, yet it was not until after His ascension at the time of the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, that it formally took its place in history. At that time was organized at Jerusalem the first Christian church, also called the mother church. It was presided over chiefly by the apostles Peter, James and John, who were looked upon as the pillars thereof.

As the beginning of church history, we must regard the fifth book of the New Testament, the History of the Apostles (The Acts). This reports the origin, the spread, the struggles and victories, joys and sorrows of the early Christians. Their life and character is here represented as in a picture. We see and hear how the power and the mercy of the Almighty manifested itself upon them; we observe with what joyfulness and fearlessness, the apostles, before high and low, declare the great deeds of God and testify to all that Jesus, whom the Jews had crucified was the Messiah, the Anointed of the Lord.

However with the courage of the witnesses of Christ, the rage of His enemies grew apace. The children of Abraham, according to the flesh, were the first to persecute Abraham's posterity in the spirit. The pious Stephen they stoned to death. James the elder they beheaded, Peter they threw into prison, and the church they harassed and terrified on all sides, so that because of the present distress, it was compelled to keep a common treasury in order to be able to help their suffering brethren.

But even in these straits, the hand of God could be clearly seen. If a fire is beaten with a stick, the sparks fly in all directions, and wherever a spark falls, it kindles a new fire. Thus it was in the case of the first Christian church. Those who

were scattered during the tribulations which came upon Stephen, went away to Phœnicia, Cyprus and Antioch, told the story of the cross and gathered new companies of believers. Paul the former persecutor of the Church, whom the grace of God had changed into a humble disciple of Jesus and selected as a "chosen vessel," traveled to the provinces of Asia minor, visited all the large cities, came to Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Athens, Philippi and organized flourishing congregations everywhere.

Meanwhile among the heathen also, persecutions arose, a proof of how widely, even in the time of the apostles, Christianity had spread. The story of Paul and Silas, which happened in Philippi, and ended in the conversion of the jailer, is well known.—About the year 64 A. D., the emperor Nero, a cruel tyrant, secretly set fire to Rome, and then spread the rumor that the despised Christians had done the deed. The conflagration raged for six days and seven nights continuously, until almost half of the city lay in ashes. In order to give his false report the appearance of truth, he now treated the Christians most cruelly. Many were crucified, others sewn in the hides of wild animals and thrown before fierce dogs, which devoured them, and still others were smeared with pitch, set up as torches in Nero's garden and burnt alive for his amusement. About this time also, Paul and Peter suffered a martyr's death; the latter was crucified, the former, however, since he was a Roman citizen, was put to death by the sword. In the reign of the emperor Domitian, which extended from 81 to 96, the second persecutions of the Christians arose. The rapid increase of their numbers is said to have been the cause thereof, since even several of the retainers of the emperor had become believers, and since Christians were considered a menace to the state. In his reign the apostle John was brought to Rome, but afterwards sent to the island of Patmos, where he received a revelation, whose story the Holy Spirit has preserved in the very last book of the Bible, as a precious bequest of the Lord to His Church.

Although the Church of Christ from the beginning had to contend with hostile powers from without, yet there were troubles soon enough from within. These arose first of all from the relation of the believers out of Judaism to those out of heathenism, and also not infrequently from false teachers

and hypocritical confessors. When the disciples had become many, there arose a murmuring among the Greeks, the converted from the heathens, against the Hebrews, or the believers from the Jews, inasmuch as the former believed that their widows were overlooked in the daily distributions of supplies. Then the twelve called together the multitude of the believers and said: "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Thereupon they chose seven such men, and then there was instituted the office of deacons or stewards of the alms, as it exists even today in many congregations.

The church at Antioch consisted of converted heathen and Jews. There came to them several from Judæa and said to the believers out of the heathen: "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." This anti-evangelical mingling of Christianity with Judaism caused much disturbance and contention in the Church. Paul and Barnabas, who were absent at the time, defended, in opposition to the Judaistic part of the Church, evangelical freedom. But since after a great deal of discussion, they could come to no agreement it was decided, that Paul and Barnabas, together with several others out of their midst, should journey to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, and present this question. They did so; when they had arrived, the leaders and representatives of the church assembled to consider the question in a fraternal spirit. But even here, there arose several of the sect of the Pharisees, who had become believers, and said: The converted heathen must be circumcised, and commanded to keep the law of Moses. This opinion was opposed especially by Peter and James. Peter related his experience with the Roman centurion Cornelius, how he himself, by a revelation from God, had been led into his house, how after hearing the Gospel Cornelius together with his whole household had been converted and the Holy Ghost had been poured out upon them, just as upon the circumcised believers. Filled with holy zeal, he cried out: "Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we are able to bear? But we believe that through the grace

of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." After James, also, had spoken, it was decided "to lay no greater burden" upon the heathen brethren. This was the first council, the first Church assembly of the Christians.

The apostle John returned again from exile to Ephesus. He lived to see the judgment of God over Jerusalem and it was his concern that the Christian churches of Asia Minor should continue pure and undefiled according to the gospel. Moreover he had many struggles with false teachers, who already at that time, began to misinterpret the word of God and to spread dangerous errors. Such a false teacher was Cerinthus, who denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. One day, John went to the baths in Ephesus. He noticed that this Cerinthus also was in the bath-house. Quickly he turned about and said: "Let us flee, for the baths might collapse, when Cerinthus, the enemy of truth, is within."

Still another report of John is preserved to us. He visited from Ephesus the neighboring churches. At one place, he found a youth, whose features attracted him; and him he recommended to the faithful care of a teacher. The youth, however, yielded himself to idleness, which is the beginning of all evil. He sank deep, and became at last the leader of a band of robbers. John visited the church again, inquired for the youth and heard the dreadful news, that he was a robber, and that he was living in the robbers' castle in a neighboring mountain chain. John hastened thither, permitted himself to be caught by the robbers and said: "Lead me to your captain." Hardly had this one seen him coming, when he took to flight. John hastened after him and called, "My son, why do you flee from your father, from an unarmed, aged man? Fear not, yet there is hope; only believe, Christ has sent me." Thereupon the youth stood still in trembling and cried bitterly. He returned with him to the church, and John did not leave him, until he had done penance and surrendered himself once more to Christ. Such was the power of love.

Love was John's favorite theme. Since, because of his high old age, he no longer could visit frequently the assemblies, he had himself carried in and repeated constantly this word, "Children, love one another." When asked, why he always said only this, he replied, "Such is God's command, and no more is needed." All the reports of the ancients agree,

that John lived until the reign of Trajan, who ascended the throne in the year 98, and died a natural death at Ephesus at the great age of 90 or more years, about 100 years after the birth of Christ.

II. FROM ST. JOHN TO CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

(From 100 to 306 A. D.)

After Domitian, Nerva ascended the imperial throne of Rome. In his reign, the Christians again enjoyed a season of quiet. He reigned, however, only from 96 to 98. He was followed by Trajan, a brave and noble man; but Christ's kingdom was to him a piece of foolishness. Nevertheless the gospel won great victories. The temples of the gods stood deserted; the number of houses of Christian worship increased. This aroused the wrath of the heathen priests, who found willing tools in those, who gladly will do anything but the will of God. Since a severe law forbade the practice of every foreign religion, the Christians could, in consequence, nowhere expect legal protection; they could even be bitterly persecuted under the guise of right. Such was the case in Bythinia, where a learned and otherwise temperate man, Pliny, was governor. Many Christians were dragged before him for condemnation. He wrote to Trajan: "The contagion of this superstition has spread not only through the cities, but has penetrated even to the villages and individual country houses." He meant Christianity.

To confess Christ was death. Many were sacrificed, especially in Syria and Palestine. Simeon, also, the venerable bishop of the church at Jerusalem, which had reorganized itself after the destruction of Jerusalem, was accused of being a Christian, was scourged for several days and finally crucified. He was a near relative to the Lord and 120 years of age. In the reign of the same emperor, Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who may have known the apostle John, suffered, about the year 107, a martyr's death. He was brought to Rome and cast before wild animals for the amusement of the people.

Trajan died in the year 117. He was followed by Adrian. The persecution continued. On the occasion of a visit of Adrian at Athens (124) Quadratus, the bishop of the place, gave to him a writ of protection and Aristides a learned

Christian did the same. Besides, the emperor received a report from a governor in Asia, in which he expressed the opinion, that it seemed to him most unjust to execute the Christians, only to satisfy the clamor of the people, without having given them a trial or convicted them of a crime. All this influenced the emperor, to accord justice to the Christians.

At the same time the Christians had to suffer a bitter persecution at the hands of the Jews. Soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, fugitives from Judæa sought to spread the spirit of insurrection among the Jews in Egypt, and many rebels ended their lives in cruel torture. The Jews in Cyrene rebelled again in the reign of Trajan. They murdered Romans and Greeks and tortured them most cruelly. Almost 220,000 lost their lives. The same was attempted by the Jews in Egypt, and on the island of Cyprus, where they slew 240,000. In Palestine there arose a deceiver, who according to Balaam's prophecy (Num. 24: 17), called himself Barchochba, *i. e.*, son of the star. This false Messiah had himself anointed king of Israel, promised miracles, persecuted most cruelly all who did not recognize him, especially the Christians, until after protracted wars, he was conquered by Adrian's general. Palestine, because of this war, was now reduced completely to a desert; 580,000 Jews perished by the sword, and a countless multitude from famine and pestilence.

Although the Christians were to some extent, protected by the laws of Adrian, yet not even then did they enjoy a legal recognition. Soon, in the reign of Adrian's successor, Antoninus Pius, the widespread fury of the people broke forth again. Various misfortunes, famine, earthquakes, great conflagrations at Rome, Antioch and Carthage, were the occasion thereof. It was believed, that the godless race of the Christians aroused the gods to such visitations of punishment. The emperor himself disapproved of the popular rage; but in the reign of his successor, Marcus Aurelius, it broke forth again. Everywhere raged the persecution of the Christians. At about this time Justin Martyr together with six other confessors was beheaded. Also the ninety-year-old Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, fell a sacrifice to the popular frenzy. When they sought to induce him to abjure Christ, he said: "For 86 years have I served Christ, and He has shown me nought but good; how could I deny him!" He was burned alive.

In France also, then called Gaul, there broke forth at that time a fearful persecution. Smyrna, in Asia Minor, was in alliance with Lyons, and from there the gospel was brought to France; from there, also, came the spirit of persecution. The first trial came from the people. In Lyons and Vienne the Christians were beaten, dragged through the streets, plundered and stoned. Many were imprisoned. The wickedness rose to a madness, which spared neither relatives nor friends. Finally the governor and the soldiers joined the rabble. Their whole rage was directed against the deacon Sanctus of Vienne, and Maurus, who had but recently been converted, and against the slave Blandina. The latter and Ponticus, whose sister, likewise, had been executed, were forced daily to witness how others while suffering inconceivable tortures, were put to death. Finally Ponticus, also, was executed: and Blandina after she had suffered the blows of the scourge, the bites of wild animals and other tortures, was placed into a net and cast before a wild bull, which tossed her about with his horns; and thus she departed this life.

It would make too long a story if one should wish to recount in detail the tortures, patience, and steadfastness of the early Christians. Many perished in dark, loathsome prisons, as for instance Ponthinus, the bishop of Lyons. The madness against the Christians was satiated not even after their death; even their dead bodies were abused. The bodies of those who suffocated in the prisons, were cast to the dogs, and guarded day and night that their friends might not give them burial. Towards the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, the persecution seems to have abated in a measure; but complete peace was not yet granted to the Church of Christ. Even in the reign of Emperor Commodus (180-192) Clement of Alexandria says: "Daily many, many martyrs are burnt, crucified and beheaded before our eyes."

In the reign of Septimus Severus (193-211) a fresh persecution arose. He forbade severely every change to Judaism or Christianity. In Carthage at this time, there was imprisoned amongst several young Christians, who were receiving their first Christian instruction, a woman, 20 years of age, Perpetua by name. She was the mother of a child at the breast. Her mother was a Christian, but her father a heathen. He went to his daughter, whom he loved, and sought to per-

suade her to deny Christ. He fell on his knees before her, kissed her hand and said with many tears: "My daughter, have pity upon my gray hairs, have pity upon your father, if I am still worthy to be called your father." But all persuasion was of no avail. Perpetua remained steadfast and with the others was cast before savage beasts and torn to pieces.

In the first half of the third century, the Christians enjoyed quiet from time to time. In addition to the many confessors who proved the word of God by their deeds, the Lord also called men who by their writings defended His honor against unbelief and superstition. The place of the apostolic fathers, of such teachers, who had enjoyed the instruction of the apostles themselves, as Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Barnabas the companion of St. Paul and Polycarp, a pupil of St. John, was taken by Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Cyprian. Origen wrought untiringly for the glory of Christ, as well as for the spread of His kingdom in Arabia. It is reported that he wrote about 6,000 writings, defended Christianity against Celsus and died in the year 250.

But besides the many learned men, who at this time consecrated all their strength to the service of Jesus Christ, there were people who used their learning and wit only to fight His teachings and to cause them to be hated by the people. This was done especially by the learned heathen Lucian and Celsus. Lucian called the Christians "Wretched ones" because they believed in a resurrection and an eternal life; and Celsus, like Nicodemus, could not understand, how a person, accustomed to sin, could change his nature. But that which is impossible with men, is possible with God.

But far more dangerous than the outside opponents of Christianity were the false teachers, who arose in the Church and changed the truth to falsehood. There is no heresy of our time which has not come up in former times, and been condemned and fought down. The Ebionites and Nazarenes, Jewish Christians, sought to belittle the glory of Christ, in that they laid too great an emphasis upon the Mosaic teaching. The Gnostics (knowing ones), of whom there were several classes, mingled Christian teaching with heathen philosophy, as the Ebionites did Judaism and Christianity. The Manicheans, followers of a certain Persian Manes, combined

teachings of the Persian religion with Christian doctrines and believed in an eternal evil as well as a good spirit. Paul of Samosata considered Christ to be a greatly talented person and denied His divine nature; and Theodotus, Artemon and Sabellius did the same. Some exalted Christ's human nature at the expense of His divinity; others, on the contrary, accepted only His divine nature, neither believed nor confessed, that the Son of God is come in the flesh, that He is "very man and very God."

In the year 250, the emperor Decius decreed, that the Christians should be compelled to conform to the heathen customs, and that those refusing should be executed. Many turned apostate, but others became strong and remained steadfast. The 15 year old Dioscoros and the Presbyter Numidicus were especially noteworthy among these. The latter encouraged many to meet death without fear. He saw his wife die upon the funeral pyre and was himself finally stoned to death. Many believers in Carthage suffered for weeks in prisons, and it was sought to force them by heat, hunger and thirst to a denial of Christ. At last, also, the head of Cyprian, who had encouraged and comforted so many, fell under the sword of the executioner.

In the year 262 the persecutions ceased once more. Emperor Gallienus permitted the Christians freedom in the exercise of their religion, and at this time the number of Christians increased rapidly in all ranks. There were many Christians at the courts of the emperors and in the armies. In place of the simple meeting houses, there arose now beautiful churches; but this period of quiet was followed by a time of sorrows. Diocletian was emperor of the Roman empire (284-304). Galerius, a bitter enemy of the Christians was the son-in-law of Diocletian, and reigned with him. At first, he succeeded in influencing Diocletian to issue a command (289), that all soldiers, including the Christians in the army, should bring sacrifices to the gods. Galerius accomplished still more. All assemblies of Christians were to be forbidden, their churches torn down. All manuscripts of the Bible (at that time there were no printed books) to be burned, the Christians were to forfeit all places of honor and preferment, and tortures were to be applied at the trials.

This command brought fear and terror to the Christians.

Soon, all the prisons were filled with believers, who would die rather than surrender the Word of God to the heathen. But they were not only to surrender the sacred scriptures; all of them, the men, women and even the children were to bring sacrifices to the gods. Yes, even all the eatables in the markets were to be sprinkled with sacrificial water, in order to bring the Christians in contact with the defiling offerings to the gods. The blood of Christians flowed for nearly eight years in copious streams. Then Galerius, the instigator of these bitter persecutions, was brought to his senses by a severe sickness. He realized that it was in no person's power to exterminate the Christians. He feared now in his pains to suffer the punishment of the God of the Christians, and by a command (301) ended this bloody persecution.

III. FROM EMPEROR CONSTANTINE TO CHARLEMAGNE.

(From 306 to 814 A. D.)

Constantine was the son of the joint-emperor Constantius, who was favorable to the Christians. He succeeded his father in the year 306 and was soon involved in war with his colleagues. It was necessary for him to advance against Maxentius in Italy. On this expedition there occurred, as Eusebius tells us, a remarkable happening. For Constantine, who even in his father's house had heard of the God of the Christians, prayed while making this to him so important expedition for the aid of God and desired to have an unmistakable sign of His existence and omnipotence. One afternoon, when the sun was high in the heavens, he saw suddenly the flaming sign of the cross under the sun with the inscription, "In this sign you will conquer." The army and the emperor were astounded. During the night, Christ appeared with the same sign of the cross, and commanded him to make this sign his banner of war. Constantine did so, defeated Maxentius a few days thereafter, and became from this time on an ardent promoter and protector of the Church of Christ. He died, after receiving the rite of holy baptism in the joyful belief in his Saviour, on the 22nd of May, 337.

In the reign of Constantine a divine of Alexandria began

a dispute, which for many centuries brought unspeakable misfortune upon the Christian Church. His name was Arius, a clever, talented man. For he taught, contrary to the Word of God and the generally accepted teaching of the Church, that the Son of God at one time was non-existent and had been created by God. Arius, together with his followers, was excommunicated from the Church by a synod convened at Alexandria. Now a fierce struggle began. Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria, arose against the false doctrine of Arius, but finally, since the Arians gained the upper hand, was forced to go to Treves into exile.

What sort of an unchristian spirit began to reign in the outwardly victorious Christianity during the reign of Constantine and his sons is made evident by the fate of the pious Athanasius. Yes, a heathen author could affirm, that the enmity of the Christians against each other was much greater, than even the rage of the wild beasts against man. During such a sorrowful condition of the Christian Church, Julian ascended the imperial throne. His father was a brother of Constantine the Great. The wickedness of his royal cousins filled his heart with aversion to Christianity, whose true worth his proud spirit could not comprehend, although at first he outwardly observed its forms and customs. But at the same time he secretly furthered heathenism. That which he had long wished for in secret, that is the suppression of Christianity, he, as emperor, now did openly. The former laws against heathenism were abolished. Everywhere altars were again erected to the gods. Here and there Julian deprived the Christians of Church property and said mockingly, when they complained, that they became poor here in order to become rich in heaven.

Because Julian had heard, that according to the Word of the Lord, Jerusalem should remain waste until the fulness of the Gentiles should have been converted to Christ, he sought to bring this word to nought by rebuilding Jerusalem. But near the place, where the ground was dug, dreadful flames burst forth repeatedly and consumed the workmen, and the undertaking had to be given up. Finally he undertook a war against the Persians; he was mortally wounded and died in the 32nd year of his life (363). When he received the wound, he is reported to have thrown a handful of blood into

the air, with the words: "Oh! Galilaean! Thou hast conquered!" He is generally known as "Julian, the Apostate."

Julian's successor, Jovian, repealed the laws against Christianity. Ambrosius was made bishop of Milan. He was humble of heart and a faithful pastor. From him Monica, the mother of Augustine, obtained advice and comfort. He imposed a Church penance upon the emperor Theodosius. The emperor had decided in his anger and in spite of the prayers of Ambrosius, to punish the city Thessalonica, which in a revolt had killed an imperial officer (390). The attack was so sudden and vehement that within a few hours 7,000 persons, guilty as well as innocent, were killed. Ambrosius wrote a warning letter to the emperor, cited the Word of the Lord to the prophet Ezekiel (Chap. 3:18) and added: "I love you, I love you tenderly. I pray for you; but do not blame me, if God is more to me than you."—Soon thereafter the emperor came to Milan and desired to visit the church. But Ambrosius refused him entrance, if he had not previously done penance. Since the emperor appealed to King David, who also at one time had sinned, Ambrosius replied: "If you have sinned as David, then do as David; do penance." The mighty emperor bowed, did penance and remained for eight months at a distance from the church. Finally he came and said to Ambrosius: "I shall submit to all, which you may impose upon me." Ambrosius demanded public church penance, to which the emperor readily submitted.

In the 4th and 5th centuries there lived many great teachers in the Church. Among these, John Chrysostom—golden-mouth—so called because of his eloquence, was especially prominent. He was a minister of the Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople. Lactantius (d. 330) was a Latin writer at the court of Constantine. Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine (d. 340), and the first Church historian; Hilary (d. 368) labored for the preservation of the true doctrine in France. Athanasius (d. 372) has been mentioned above. Others deserving mention are Ephrem the Syrian (d. 378); Basilius, bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia (d. 379); Gregory of Nissa (d. 394); Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem (d. 386); Epiphanius (d. 403), an ardent opponent of real and apparent heretics; Hieronymus (Jerome) (d. 420), a monk in the cloister at Bethlehem, a very learned man, but often

much too eager; Theodoret, a learned and pious student of the Scriptures and Church historian (d. 456); Leo, one of the most keen-minded and shrewdest of the bishops of Rome (d. 461); Gregory the Great, a pious man, who earnestly desired the spread of the Gospel (d. 604).

A pillar of the Christian Church was Augustine. He was born in Tagaste, Africa. His father was a heathen, his mother Monica, a faithful Christian, who was very anxious for the salvation of her son's soul. Augustine was educated to be a teacher of rhetoric, but fell in with bad company, went astray until his 30th year. His mother prayed for him without ceasing. When she complained to the bishop Ambrosius and began to doubt the conversion of her son, he instilled her with fresh hope and said: "This son of tears will not be lost." Because of the preaching of Ambrosius, Augustine gained more and more respect for the Word of God. At one time he heard from the mouth of a pious old man the story of the conversion of Victorinus, a celebrated teacher of rhetoric. This affected him greatly. He called out to his friend Alypius: "The unlettered are gaining the kingdom of heaven, but we, with all our learning, are rolling in our sins."

Thereupon Augustine hastened into the garden. His friend Alypius followed him. A flood of tears relieved his oppressed heart, and weeping he cast himself beneath a fig tree and prayed: "Lord, O how long? Wilt Thou retain Thine anger forever? Remember not my sins! How long shall I say: Tomorrow — why not at this hour put an end to my servitude?" — While yet thus praying, he heard this cry repeatedly from a neighboring yard: "Tolle lege — tolle lege!" that is, "Take and read." Augustine pondered over this, opened the letters of Paul, which he had with him, and read the words Romans 13:13, 14. Augustine saw in these words the innermost depths of his heart revealed; the almighty arm of the Lord, who frees from sin and death, was revealed to him; rest and peace poured into his heart, he recognized the hour of his rebirth, the transition from the life of the flesh to the life of the spirit. His mother, however, praised with him the faithful God, who had finally heard her prayer.

Augustine from this time on, lived wholly for the Lord, who had taken mercy on him. Deeply he felt that his con-

version was due to grace alone and not to merit. Soon thereafter he betook himself to Africa, was made presbyter and finally bishop of Hippo. The free grace of God in saving sinful man was now his favorite theme, and for this precious gospel he desired to live and die. When therefore an English monk Pelagius taught, contrary to the Word of God, that man could by his own efforts attain salvation, and that he was not by nature sinful and estranged from God, Augustine arose, and victoriously refuted this pernicious doctrine, to which the human heart, which has not recognized its depravity, is so much inclined. Augustine died at the age of 76 in the year 429.

It is said not without reason, "When the goblets become golden, then the preachers become wooden." Through Constantine the Great, the Church attained outwardly to great power and prominence, but soon destructive influences began to develop within, causing many devout but ill-advised souls to withdraw into solitude. Such was the origin of monks and hermits, who in the 4th and 5th centuries increased so rapidly in number. The many doctrinal controversies also were destructive to the growth of the Church. They were carried on, as a rule, with great bitterness. While the Church was thus torn with dissensions, Rome laid the foundation of her future power.

But soon the Lord came with His scourge and aroused once more the Church, which had become lax and worldly-minded. The Church, in the first half of the 7th century, suffered greatly at the hands of Mohammed, who had filled the whole Orient with terror, and at the point of the sword forced every one, Christian, Jew and heathen, to accept his false teaching. He died, in the year 632, after he had gained almost 100,000 followers and had taken the holy city of Mecca. His work of destruction was continued by his successors, who called themselves caliphs, i. e., governors. In a short time Mesopotamia and Persia, Syria and Palestine, Egypt, Northern Africa, Spain and Portugal had fallen into their hands; yes, they penetrated up to France and even appeared before the gates of Constantinople. Everywhere one heard the cry: "There is but one God and Mohammed is His prophet."—For a great part of Christendom it was a severe trial; since it

had not remained faithful to the Lord, and was no longer the salt of the earth.

While the greater portion of the Eastern Church was being overrun by Mohammedanism, the Lord prepared the way for His Gospel among the uncivilized peoples, who, since the 4th century, had been storming the Roman empire. Amongst the Goths, on the Danube, Ulfilas spread the Gospel; among the Gauls (Frenchmen) Martin of Tours. The Burgundians, Suebi and Longobards became acquainted with Christianity on their expeditions of war into Gaul and Italy. To England, Gregory the Great (596) sent several missionaries. From England and Ireland, there came later messengers of the Gospel to Germany: Columban to the Bavarians; Gallus to Switzerland; Kilian to the East-Franconians; Willebrord to the Frisians.—Of course at that time the Gospel had already been adulterated to a great extent with human additions, and many people were converted only outwardly to Christianity.

In the year 716 the Englishman Winfred, later Boniface, *i. e.*, benefactor, journeyed into the wilds of Germany. He labored in Thuringia, Friesland, Hesse, Saxony and Bavaria at a great risk of his life. While on one of his journeys in Hesse he came, near Geismar, upon a huge oak, where the heathen were worshiping. Inspired with holy zeal, he had the oak cut down to show that their idolatry was vain. The astounded heathen permitted this to be done, in the expectation that their god would punish this sacrilege on the spot. But when the oak fell, and they remained unpunished, they marveled greatly, and gladly heard Boniface.

In the eventide of his life, an old man of 70 years, he desired to go into Friesland once more as a messenger of peace. The Lord blessed his work. Many were converted to Christ. One day the newly-converted were to be confirmed on the plain of Dokkum. The day appeared. But early in the morning there came, with sword and spear, a wild horde of heathen. Boniface called to his followers, who had taken position to oppose, and said: "Children, fight not; the Word of God forbids us to avenge evil with evil." The heathen thereupon rushed on and killed Boniface together with 53 of his followers (754).

In the year 809, Charlemagne was ruler of the Franks.

His kingdom embraced Germany, France, Italy and a part of Spain. Charlemagne was desirous of spreading Christianity throughout his whole empire; but he did not always resort to the best means. For example, he forced the Saxons to accept Christianity at the point of the sword. However, he did much for churches and schools. He loved the singing of sacred songs, and had singers and organ-players come from Italy, in order that the singing in the churches might be improved. He punished the greed of the bishops and enforced a better discipline among the clergy.

IV. FROM CHARLEMAGNE TO THE REFORMATION.

(From 814 to 1517 A. D.)

In the reign of Louis the Pious, the successor of Charlemagne, the Lord called a man who gave himself entirely to the spreading of the Gospel among the northern people. This was Ansgar. He was born in France in the year 801, lost his mother in his fifth year, but never forgot her heartfelt admonitions. Even as a boy, he showed great earnestness, and disclosed a love for a life pleasing to God. When twenty years of age, he presided as rector over the famous monastery at Corvey. About this time, Harold, King of the Danes, came to Mayence and was baptized at Ingelheim (826). On this occasion he asked for a servant of God for his people. Ansgar, who was twenty-five years of age, was ready to accept this call in the name of the Lord. One of his brother monks, Aubert, of noble family, went with him. When they had arrived in Denmark (826), Ansgar founded a seminary, in which young men were to be prepared for service as missionaries. The first pupils were youths bought out of slavery. — In the year 829 Ansgar went to Sweden. Soon here also a Christian Church was organized. In the year 831 Ansgar was appointed arch-bishop of Hamburg. Here he labored with love for the spreading of the Gospel. Here also he founded a mission-school, and journeyed round about to the heathen. In the year 845 he was appointed arch-bishop of Bremen, also. He always led a very temperate life. But finally he fell sick. He felt that his end was near, and prepared

himself for it with fervent prayer. He departed this life peacefully on the 3d of February, 865, in his sixty-fourth year.

As Ansgar, so at this time and later, many Christians were awakened, who did not fail to heed the command of Christ, to go into all the world, and to preach the Gospel to every creature. Rembert (d. 888), Ansgar's successor, preached the Gospel to the people of Brandenburg. Cyrillus and Methodius went as missionaries from Constantinople to the Bulgarians (866), and later to the Moravians. Finally the Gospel penetrated also to the Poles and to Russia. In the year 1168, the inhabitants of the island Rugen were forced by the Danes to accept Christianity. Just as forced was the conversion of the Livonians, Prussians and Lithuanians in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. A remarkable attempt, to extend the kingdom of Christ, were the expeditions against the Mohammedans, called Crusades (1096-1291), in which the sword was to do that which the Word of God alone is able.

The bishop of Rome, who now called himself pope, *i. e.*, father, attained at this time his greatest power. Before him bowed all people and their rulers. The man who succeeded in making the power of the pope felt to an unheard of degree was Hildebrand, the son of a carpenter in Italy, known as Pope Gregory VII. At that time Henry IV. was emperor of Germany. He did not wish to recognize the power of the pope; he was placed under the ban by the latter and not released until he submitted. In mid-winter, accompanied only by his wife and a faithful servant, he journeyed over the snow covered Alps to Italy and begged the pope for release. After a long refusal, the pope agreed, provided he submitted to the punishment, which he should impose upon him. When Henry was about to pass through the second of the three walls surrounding Canossa, where Gregory was on a visit, he was obliged to leave his retinue behind, and in the garb of a penitent, clad in sack cloth, to remain in the court-yard barefooted for three days — and this in the beginning of January. On the fourth day, Gregory had him come before him and lifted the ban, but only on the most severe conditions.

At this time the celebrated Anselm lived in England, one of the most learned and pious men of his time. Even in his

fifteenth year, he desired to enter a cloister, which, however, his father did not permit. He was now involved in the vanities of the world, and to his death he lamented this lost time. In the year 1060 he became a monk in a monastery in Normandy, and finally arch-bishop of Canterbury in England, where he died in his seventy-eighth year (1109). He left many writings, in which with the greatest acumen he discussed the most important principles of the Christian faith. Of Christ's mediatorship, he says: "I perceive, that the person, whom we seek as mediator, must be constituted as follows: He must not die of necessity, for he must be almighty (God); but he must also be a true man, that he might be a propitiation for the sins of man." He worshiped Christ as the true God-man.

In the twelfth century, there lived a man, who was a great light of his time. This was Bernhard, born in Burgundy, France, in the year 1091. He was the third son of a noble family, and early showed himself open, more than his brothers, to the Christian influence of his mother, who was greatly anxious for the education of her children. In his school years, he made great progress in the sciences and became a powerful preacher, who did not fear to tell the truth even to the pope and the clergy. Similar voices bearing witness against the ever-increasing evils in the Church became louder and louder. Almost simultaneously with the Bohemian and Moravian brethren, the Waldenses, who have preserved their existence to the present time, bore witness against the corruption in the Church. The latter owe their origin to a rich citizen of Lyons, Waldus by name, who made the Gospel the guide of his life and gave all his possessions to the poor. They were persecuted most cruelly by the papal party. In England, the learned and acute John Wiclyffe, professor at the University of Oxford, began to preach publicly against several false doctrines, which at that time were accepted generally, and to scourge the vices of the monks. In Bohemia, John Huss arose, and showed to the people the great injuries of which Christianity was suffering. Enlightened men of that time demanded a reformation of the Church "in head and members." But the popes sought only to affirm their power and to remove everything, which seemed to oppose their preposterous presumptions. It is true, in the year 1414, a gen-

eral Church-assembly (council) was called together at Constance, and an immoral pope was deposed from office, but a year after the pious John Huss, who had arisen as reformer, was condemned by the same assembly to be burned at the stake. In 1416 his friend and co-worker Hieronymous (Jerome) of Prague was forced to ascend the pyre. Nor did the conference, called together at Basel in 1431, and which continued to the year 1443, that is twelve years, accomplish a reformation. The hour of the Lord was not yet come, but was approaching.

V. FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT DAY.

In the year 1483, a poor miner, Hans Luther, journeyed from the village Moera to the annual market at Eisleben. His wife accompanied him. Here in Eisleben, she bore, on the 10th of November, a boy. This child, in accordance with God's wonderful plan, grew up to become the man of God, Martin Luther. Hans Luther later removed to Mansfeld. Here little Martin received his first instructions. His parents educated him in the fear of the Lord. In the year 1497, his father brought him to the school in Magdeburg, and the year following, to Eisenach, where he had to beat his way wretchedly, until a pious woman, named Cotta, took him into her house and to her table. In the year 1501, Luther was ready to enter the university at Erfurt, where he devoted himself with great assiduity to the sciences. According to the wish of his father, he was to become a lawyer. But for this he had no liking; and when at one time on a journey his dear friend Alexius was killed at his side by lightning, he was moved so deeply that he withdrew entirely from the world and entered (1505) the monastery of the Augustines at Erfurt.

In the monastery Luther had at first to do very hard work; nevertheless he searched the Holy Scriptures continually and sought with great earnestness to live a holy and God-fearing life. But the more he sought, by means of all manners of penances, fasts and prayers and good works to attain his purpose, the more he felt his misery of sin and the

weakness of human nature. In the anguish of his soul, he was cheered greatly by the comforting words of an old brother monk (Staupitz), who told him of the power of faith, and explained to him the cardinal truth of the Gospel, namely that we cannot become justified before God by any works whatsoever, but only by faith, which overcomes the world within us and without. Then the light of faith burst upon him, as it shone from the two passages of scripture, Romans 1:17, and 3:28. He believed and found peace and comfort, in the conviction that all his sins were forgiven him, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits. In this way Luther became a reformer, in that he himself first became reformed through the free grace of God. In 1508 he was called to a professorship at the University of Wittenberg, where he taught with great success and directed his hearers especially to the Holy Scriptures.

In the year 1517 there came into that region a friar, John Tetzel by name. He engaged in the sale of indulgences in a shameless manner; he sold letters of indulgence, which should accomplish the forgiveness of sins for the dead as well as for the living. Yes, Tetzel even sold indulgences for sins which one intended to commit. This pained Luther greatly. He nailed, therefore, on the thirty-first of October, 1517, on the gates of the church at Wittenberg ninety-five propositions or theses which he was ready to discuss. These theses were directed chiefly against indulgences and against justification by works in general; above all, this truth was emphasized, namely, that Jesus Christ alone makes us free from sin. Like a flash, these theses inflamed the minds of the people. Within fourteen days they were known throughout all Germany, and in six weeks throughout all Europe. No one dared to dispute them. Where one voice arose against Luther, three declared themselves for him. The rage of the priests and monks, however, knew no bounds. The learned Erasmus said in jest and earnest: "Luther has done wrong in two respects; he has touched the crown of the pope and the stomach of the monks."

At this time, the recently crowned emperor Charles V. had issued a summons for a diet at Worms, and here also Luther's case was to be investigated and decided. On the sixteenth of April, 1521, Luther entered Worms. Even before

the city, his friends warned him, not to cast himself into the threatening danger. Luther answered: "To Worms I am called, to Worms I must go; and even though there were as many devils there as tiles on the roofs, I would enter nevertheless."—Luther was asked in the presence of the emperor, the cardinals, the bishops, ambassadors from the king and the pope and 200 other high officials, whether he would recant that which he had written. He asked for time for reflection. On the following day (April 18) he was summoned again. Luther declared now that he could not recant what he had written; but that he would gladly be refuted if it were done on Scriptural grounds. Then Dr. Eck arose, and demanded from Luther a short, concise answer, whether he would recant or not. Then Luther replied. "Since then a plain, simple reply is demanded of me, I will give one, which shall have neither horns nor teeth: I believe neither the pope nor his councils, for both have erred often, and contradicted themselves. I can and will not therefore recant, except it be that I am refuted with passages from the Holy Scriptures, or with open clear reasons and causes; for it is neither safe nor advisable to do anything contrary to one's conscience. Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen."

Friends and enemies were astounded by this firm confession of Luther. The emperor, however, declared him a heretic on the following day, and placed him under the imperial ban; nevertheless, the promised escort should be kept for him until his return home. When Luther's enemies sought to persuade the emperor not to grant the escort, that is protection during his return, as his ancestor Sigismund had not kept it for Huss, he said: "And if all the world be untrue, nevertheless the German emperor will prove himself true and faithful. Even before this time, Luther had already been placed under the ban by the pope. The emperor permitted him to remain in safety at Worms twenty days longer. On the 3d of May, 1521, he spent the night with his brother at Moera, and on the following day, while journeying from here (he was just driving through a deep pass), when, behold! there came upon him five disguised knights, lifted him out of his wagon, placed him upon a horse and hastened away with him. They went through underbrush and forest until at 11 o'clock in the evening they arrived at a high mountain castle.

This was the famed Wartburg. But he was kept like an imprisoned nobleman, and they called him Junker George. This had been thus arranged by Luther's wise ruler, the Elector Frederick; for otherwise he would not have been safe from the attacks of his enemies. Here in the Wartburg, Luther completed the translation of the New Testament, later with the aid of his friends Melancthon and Bugenhagen, that of the Old Testament also. It was generally believed that Luther was dead, and consequently the first outbreak of violence blew over. However he left the Wartburg as early as Ash Wednesday, 1522, and hastened to Wittenberg, where Carlstadt and some others had created a great confusion. He succeeded by preaching eight sermons in subduing factions and zealots and in restoring order and quiet.

The man whom the Lord called to begin the work of the Church Reformation in Switzerland was Ulrich (Huldreich) Zwingli, born on January 1, 1484, in Wildhaus, in that part of Switzerland called the county of Toggenburg. As early as his tenth year, he was sent to Basel to learn the sciences, soon thereafter to Berne and later even to Vienna. In the year 1505 Zwingli was created Master of Philosophy. He turned now to theology, in which he had as a teacher Wittenbach, a learned man inclined towards the Reformation. Zwingli sought everywhere for the truth, read the Scriptures diligently, especially the letters of the Apostle Paul, which he almost committed to memory, and used in addition the writings of the early teachers of the Church. In this manner continually seeking for the truth, he was, from 1506 on, pastor of Glarus. From there he went, in 1516, as pastor to the famous abbey of Einsiedeln, a place of pilgrimage in the Canton Schwyz. Here the gross superstitions brought him to a public acknowledgment of the truth, as it is in Jesus Christ; for in this monastery was shown, as is yet done today, a picture of Mary, which was credited with performing miracles, and before which yearly hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from far and near fell in prayer. Yes, over the entrance of the abbey were cut the blasphemous words: "Here is full release from all sins." Zwingli opposed such an abomination. His word was heeded to the extent that the inscription was removed, and many of the relics were buried. At Glarus he had preached the pure Word of God.

But at Einsiedeln, he emphasized even more the all sufficient merit of Christ, because he could not help seeing how disgracefully that had been relegated to the rear; he also bore witness from the pulpit against pilgrimages and all superstitions.

In 1518 Zwingli received a call to Zurich. In his initial sermon he declared that he would preach the Word of God, and not that of men. And he did it, too. Two men of the council, who heard this sermon, said: "Here we have a true preacher of the truth, he will tell us, how the case stands." When his opponents threw it up to him, that he was preaching Luther's teaching, he could assure them that he had preached the Word of God pure and undefiled for two years, before the name of Luther had become known to him.—In 1520 the government at Zurich decreed that all ministers should preach the Word of God free and unhindered and should keep silence concerning all human institutions. In 1523 there was a public religious discussion between him and the opponents of the Reformation. He wrote for it sixty-seven dogmas, which he defended victoriously. At the same time the learned and gentle Oekolampadius (1524) preached the Gospel in Basel. In Geneva, Viret and Farel arose as Reformers, who were joined in 1535 by the learned Calvin. The work of the Reformation soon found a permanent home in the cantons Berne, Neufchatel, Aarau, St. Gall, Thurgau and Schaffhausen; yes, even Wurttemberg was influenced by the spirit of Zwingli and would be Reformed today, as well as Switzerland, had not Brenz and Andreae attempted a counter reformation and succeeded in a measure. In Strassburg, Heidelberg, Mayence, Cologne, Treves and other cities; yes, even in Brandenburg, the heart of the present kingdom of Prussia, the pulse-beats of the new life which had quickened in little Switzerland were strongly felt.

Since Luther and Zwingli could come to no agreement concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, they came together at the desire of the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, to Marburg for a conference (1529). But no agreement was reached. Luther was unyielding and rejected coldly Zwingli's hand offered in brotherly love, an act which hurt the good-hearted Swiss and even pressed out tears. And despite this, the pious Zwingli said of him later: "In my estima-

tion, Luther is as valorous a fighter of the Lord, one who searches the Scriptures with as great earnestness, as any one on the face of the earth, within the last thousand years.”—The four Swiss cantons Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden barred out the Reformation. There arose between them and the Reformed cantons a great deal of friction, which finally broke out into open hostility. The Catholic party took to arms and advanced against Zurich with 8,000 men. It was a question now of protecting house and property, wife and child; yet the inhabitants of Zurich were able to collect only 500. These advanced in the direction of Lake Zug against the enemy. In accordance with an old custom, Zwingli also had to set out and carry the flag. On the 11th of October, 1531, they met each other in the neighborhood of Kappel. The troops of Zurich had to yield. Zwingli was hit on the head by a stone and sank to the ground. Three times he strove to arise, but each time fell to the ground again unconscious. Thus he was found by his enemies, his hands crossed over his breast awaiting in prayer his last hour. A wild warrior, sword in hand, called out to him: “Will you go to the confessional and pray to the Holy Virgin?” Zwingli shook his head; immediately the sword pierced him. The embittered enemies quartered his body, burned him and scattered the ashes to the winds.—Luther died on the 18th of February, 1546, and as others continued his work, so also Bullinger stepped into the breach, caused by Zwingli’s death, and continued his work at Zurich.—Melancthon died on the 19th of April, 1560; Calvin on the 27th of May, 1564.

Soon after the death of the leaders of the Reformation there came, especially in Germany, instead of the youthful evangelic life, a dead orthodoxy. Controversies over single dogmas were many and passionate, and Melancthon especially together with those of like opinion, who did not agree fully with the strict Lutherans, had to experience the “rage of the theologians.” In 1618 a religious war broke out, which raged for 30 years and converted Germany into a waste. Two-thirds of its inhabitants were destroyed by the sword, hunger and pestilence. This season of tribulation was followed again by a time of refreshment. God awakened in the evangelical Church, during the 17th and 18th centuries, a number of men who were filled with the Holy Ghost and who

infused into the dying Christianity a new life. But this revival was followed again by a time of unbelief. This unbelief originated in England, and soon spread over France, Germany and other countries. The Word of God was rejected, and it was claimed that the human reason was the most trustworthy guide to true happiness. In France, this infidelity rose to the highest degree. Sunday, the Christian festivals, together with everything which reminded one of Christianity, were set aside, and an immoral woman was carried about in a procession and worshiped as the Goddess of reason. And this occurred at the end of the eighteenth century.

Although the Church of God continues to be a militant one and to have many a spot and wrinkle, yet God has not failed to declare Himself for it in our time. The century which has just passed, as well as the beginning year of the present, shows unmistakable signs of the continuous presence of the Lord, who has said to His own: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." His word, name, day and people are sought, loved and honored by thousands upon thousands. The Gospel is being proclaimed from countless pulpits; in the churches an active life prevails and a bond of closer kinship and brotherly union is uniting Christendom. Christian benevolence is on the increase. Everywhere Christian societies are coming into being. Educational and charitable institutions, whose purpose is to relieve physical and spiritual want, and to bring ever nearer the empire of peace of our common Saviour. And what acceptable, yes surprising, progress has not the past century to show in the field of missions! The zeal for the spread of the Gospel is continually becoming more general. Hardly ever before has the work of missions been in such bloom and strength as at present; and never has the Lord opened to this Gospel as many doors, as in our time. Many willing messengers of the Gospel enter everywhere, and all believing Christian hearts pray to the Lord with one accord:

Fly abroad, thou mighty Gospel!
Win and conquer,—never cease;
May thy lasting, wide dominions
Multiply and still increase.
Sway Thy scepter,
Saviour! all the world around.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES.

I. FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Primitive Time.

- " Adam.
- " Cain and Abel.
- " Birth of Seth.
- " Birth of Enoch.
- " Birth of Noah.
- " The Deluge.
- " Death of Noah.

B. C.

- 1993 Birth of Abraham.
- 1923 Abraham departs from Ur.
- 1918 Abraham goes from Haran to Canaan.
- 1893 Birth of Isaac.
- 1853 Isaac marries Rebecca.
- 1833 Birth of Jacob and Esau.
- 1819 Death of Abraham.
- 1742 Birth of Joseph.
- 1714 Joseph a shepherd.
- 1714 Death of Isaac.
- 1714 Joseph in prison, interprets dreams.
- 1712 Joseph before Pharaoh.
- 1712 Beginning of the years of plenty.
- 1705 Beginning of the years of famine.
- 1703 Jacob goes to Egypt.
- 1689 Death of Jacob.
- 1633 Death of Joseph.
- 1576 Birth of Aaron.
- 1573 Birth of Moses.
- 1493 Exodus.
- 1493 The giving of the law on Sinai.
- 1453 Death of Moses; Joshua succeeds him.
- 1447 Death of Joshua.
- 1446 Beginning of the time of the Judges.

B. C.

- 1326 Deborah and Barak Judges.
- 1286 Gideon.
- 1198 Jephtha.
- 1167 Samson.
- 1147 Eli.
- 1107 Samuel.
- 1097 Saul is king.
- 1057 David is king.
- 1017 Solomon is king.
- 1014 The building of the Temple begun.
- 1007 The Temple finished.
- 977 Division of the kingdom of Solomon.
- 921 Ahab is king.
- 918 Jehosaphat is king.
- 916 Jehosaphat goes with Ahab against the Syrians.
- 901 Jehoram king in Israel.
- 883 Joas king in Judah.
- 861 Joahas king in Israel.
- 806 Azariah or Uzziah king in Judah.
- 728 Hosea king in Israel.
- 726 Hezekiah king in Judah.
- 723 Shalmanezar takes Samaria.
- 719 Beginning of the Assyrian captivity.
- 697 Sennacherib moves against Judah.
- 640 Manasseh is king.
- 640 Josiah is king.
- 628 Jeremiah the prophet is called.
- 623 Josiah cleanses the temple.
- 606 Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem.
- 600 3,023 Jews led into captivity.
- 598 Zedekiah is king.

B. C.

- 590 Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem for the second time.
 588 Judah led into captivity in Babylon.
 555 Belshazzar is king.
 553 Daniel's vision of the four monarchies.
 538 Darius conquers Babylon.
 536 Koresh (Cyrus) king of Persia.
 536 The Jews receive permission to return.
 534 Daniel's second vision.
 522 Xerxes stops the building of the temple.
 518 The building of the temple resumed.
 516 The temple is finished.
 515 Ezra comes to Jerusalem and arranges public worship.
 479 Esther queen in Vashti's stead.
 474 The fall of Haman, the enemy of the Jews.
 445 Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem and becomes governor.

B. C.

- 332 The Jews become Grecian subjects.
 323 The Jews subject to Syria after the death of Alexander the Great.
 301 The Jews under Egyptian rule (98 years).
 207 Antiochus desecrates the temple at Jerusalem.
 203 The Jews under Syrian rule (73 years).
 168 The Jews compelled to give up the law.
 167 The death of Mattathias the priest, because of his zeal for the law.
 161 Judas Maccabæus loses his life in battle.
 142 Simon takes the citadel of Jerusalem.
 63 Jerusalem taken by the Romans.
 37 Herod the Great receives the crown.
 18 Herod begins to enlarge the temple.
 1 The annunciation of John the Baptist and of Christ.

II. FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A. D.

- JESUS CHRIST, the Saviour of world, is born.
 2 Death of Herod the Great. His successors are his three sons, Archelaus in Judæa, Herod Antipas in Galilee, Philip in Ituræa.
 10 Archelaus banished to Vienne in Gaul (France). His province is placed under Roman governors, subject to the governors in Syria.
 12 Jesus goes to Jerusalem with his parents.
 14 Death of Cæsar Augustus. Tiberius his successor.
 25 Pilate governor of Syria, Judæa, and Samaria.

A. D.

- 28 John the Baptist at the Jordan preaching repentance.
 30 Jesus, baptized of John, begins to teach.
 32 John the Baptist beheaded by Herod Antipas.
 33 Suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ.
 34 Death of Philip, tetrarch of Ituræa and Batanæa.
 36 Pilate deposed and banished; commits suicide.
 37 Herod Agrippa receives the provinces of Philip and the title of king.
 38 The conversion of Paul the apostle.

A. D.

- 39 Herod Antipas is banished to Gaul; his provinces given to Agrippa.
- 41 Paul's first visit in Jerusalem after his conversion.
- 44 Paul and Barnabas in Antioch.
- 44 James the elder beheaded at the command of Herod Agrippa; Peter is cast into prison. Death of Agrippa soon thereafter.
- 45 Famine in Judæa, from 44 to 46. Paul goes to Jerusalem twice with aid and soon thereafter sets out on his first missionary journey.
- 48 Herod Agrippa II. becomes prince of Chalcis and superintendent of the temple in Jerusalem.
- 51 The Council of the Apostles in Jerusalem. Paul visits the city a third time and then sets out on his second missionary journey.
- 52 Paul arrives in Corinth; becomes acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla.
- 53 The writing of the two epistles to the Thessalonians.
- 54 Paul in Asia Minor. Goes to Jerusalem the fourth time and sets out on his third missionary journey.

A. D.

- 55 Paul arrives at Ephesus and remains there for two years.
- 57 Paul flees to Macedonia, goes from there to Achaia and writes the first and second epistles to the Corinthians, and the first epistle to Timothy.
- 58 Paul is again at Corinth, writes the epistle to the Romans, goes to Jerusalem to the feast of Pentecost, is imprisoned; held captive in Cæsarea for two years.
- 60 Paul before Felix; he appeals to Cæsar and is sent to Rome. Felix is deposed and Festus takes his place.
- 61 Paul arrives in Rome and is held captive there for two years.
- 62 James the Just suffers a martyr's death.
- 64 The first persecution. Paul is beheaded, Peter is crucified.
- 67 Beginning of the Jewish war, which lasted seven years. The Christians in Judæa flee to Pella and are safe.
- 70 Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.
- 95 John the apostle banished to Patmos.
- 100 John dies at Ephesus.

III. IMPORTANT HISTORICAL EVENTS.

A. D.

- 33 Outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Birthday of the Christian Church.
- 35 Conversion of the centurion Cornelius. Beginning of foreign missions.

A. D.

- 40 Founding of the Church at Antioch, where the believers were first called Christians.
- 64 First persecution of the Christians under the Emperor Nero.

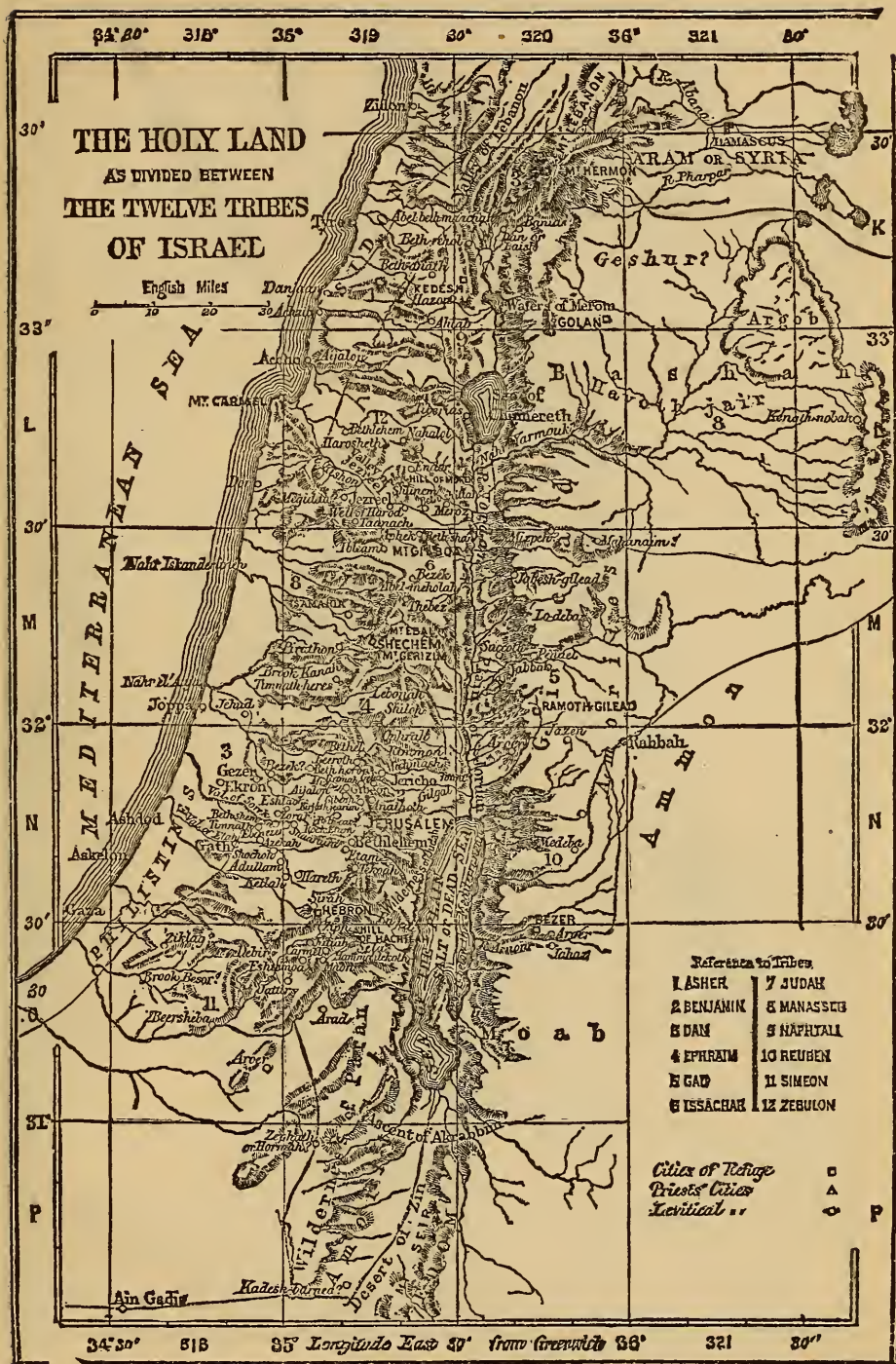
A. D.

- 95 Second persecution. Banishment of John. Domitian.
- 105 Third persecution, in the reign of the Emperor Trajan.
- 161 Fourth persecution, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius.
- 202. Fifth persecution, in the reign of the Emperor Septimius Severus.
- 235 Sixth persecution, in the reign of the Emperor Maximus.
- 250 Seventh persecution, in the reign of the Emperor Decius.
- 257 Eighth persecution, in the reign of Emperor Valerian.
- 274 Ninth persecution, in the reign of the Emperor Aurelian.
- 303 Tenth and most bloody persecution, in the reign of the Emperor Diocletian.
- 311 The Emperor Constantine embraces Christianity.
- 314 Toleration granted to all religions in the Roman Empire.
- 324 Christianity is made the state religion.
- 325 First Church council in Nicæa. The Nicene creed.
- 330 Heathenism forbidden. Closing of the pagan temples.
- 355 Beginnings of relic worship.
- 363 The Gothic translation of the Bible of Ulfilas makes its appearance.
- 375 Calling on the saints first begun.
- 381 The synod acknowledges precedence to the Roman bishop.
- 400 Pictures introduced into the churches.
- 429 Death of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo.
- 569 Mohammed born.
- 590 Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome.

A D.

- 692 Crucifixes, tonsure, money for masses come into use.
- 716 Boniface, the Apostle of the Germans.
- 726 The Emperor Leo forbids the use of pictures.
- 763 Introduction of the confessional.
- 869 Pope Nicholas forbids the priests to wed.
- 880 Separation of the Greek and Roman churches.
- 1049 Church council at Rheims. The pope is acknowledged generally as the head of the Church.
- 1096 The first crusade to the Holy Land.
- 1099 Jerusalem taken by storm. Foundation of the order of St. John.
- 1170 Peter Waldus, founder of the church of the Waldenses.
- 1187 Sultan Saladin captures Jerusalem. The Christian power in the Orient broken.
- 1229 The inquisition introduced in France.
- 1363 Wycliffe translates the Bible into the English language.
- 1387 A schism in the Church for 50 years. Three popes ruled.
- 1414 The chalice in the Lord's Supper withheld from the people.
- 1415 John Huss of Bohemia is burned at the stake in Constance.
- 1416 Hieronymus (Jerome) of Prague burned at the stake.
- 1440 Invention of printing.
- 1453 Constantinople taken by the Mohammedans.
- 1457 The Bohemian and Moravian brethren.
- 1483 Martin Luther born.
- 1484 Huldreich Zwingli born.

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| <p>A. D.</p> <p>1492 Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus.</p> <p>1505 Knox, the reformer of Scotland, born.</p> <p>1506 Zwingli preaches the Gospel in Glarus.</p> <p>1516 Zwingli in the Abbey of Einsiedeln, where he combats superstition.</p> <p>1517 The 95 theses of Luther. Beginning of the Reformation in Germany.</p> <p>1521 Luther at the Diet of Worms. He is taken to the Wartburg.</p> <p>1524 The entire canton Zurich becomes reformed.</p> <p>1526 The Reformation in Hesse. The Bible translated into Swedish.</p> <p>1528 Reformation in St. Gallen, Basel, Constance, Toggenburg.</p> <p>1529 Diet at Speyer; Protestants.</p> <p>1530 The confession at Augsburg.</p> <p>1531 Zwingli dies on the battlefield of Kappel.</p> <p>1534 Bible translated into German by Luther.</p> <p>1539 Calvin in Strassburg.</p> <p>1546 Dr. Martin Luther dies (18th of February).</p> <p>1559 Persecution of the Huguenots in France.</p> <p>1560 Death of Melancthon.</p> <p>1563 Heidelberg catechism published by Ursinus and Olevianus.</p> <p>1564 The death of Calvin, the Reformer of Geneva.</p> <p>1572 Massacre on St. Bartholomew's night, in Paris. More than 30,000 Huguenots (Reformed) murdered.</p> <p>1618 Beginning of the Thirty Years' War—a religious war.</p> | <p>A. D.</p> <p>1630 Gustavus Adolphus, the Swedish king, comes to the aid of the Protestants.</p> <p>1648 End of the Thirty Years' War.</p> <p>1685 Repeal of the Edict of Nantes. Persecution of the Reformed.</p> <p>1720 Founding of Methodism in England.</p> <p>1723 Founding of the Moravian church, by Count Zinzendorf.</p> <p>1794 First Missionary Society founded in England.</p> <p>1816 Founding of the Mission House in Basle.</p> <p>1817 Organization of the United Church in Prussia.</p> <p>1834 Slavery abolished in the British West Indies.</p> <p>1853 The gates of Japan opened by Commodore Perry.</p> <p>1861 American Civil War. More than 4,000,000 slaves set free.</p> <p>1869 Jano, the first Japanese baptized in Yokohama.</p> <p>1872 Founding of the first Reformed church in Japan.</p> <p>1873 Meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York.</p> <p>1881 Organization of the first Christian Endeavor Society.</p> <p>1893 Congress of religions, World's Columbian Exposition.</p> <p>1898 Ejection of Spain from Western Hemisphere. Hague Peace Conference.</p> <p>1900 The Boxer uprising in China.</p> <p>1900 Ecumenical missionary conference in New York.</p> <p>1902 Pres. Roosevelt lays cornerstone of Grace Reformed Church, Wash., D. C.</p> |
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Voyage to Rome.

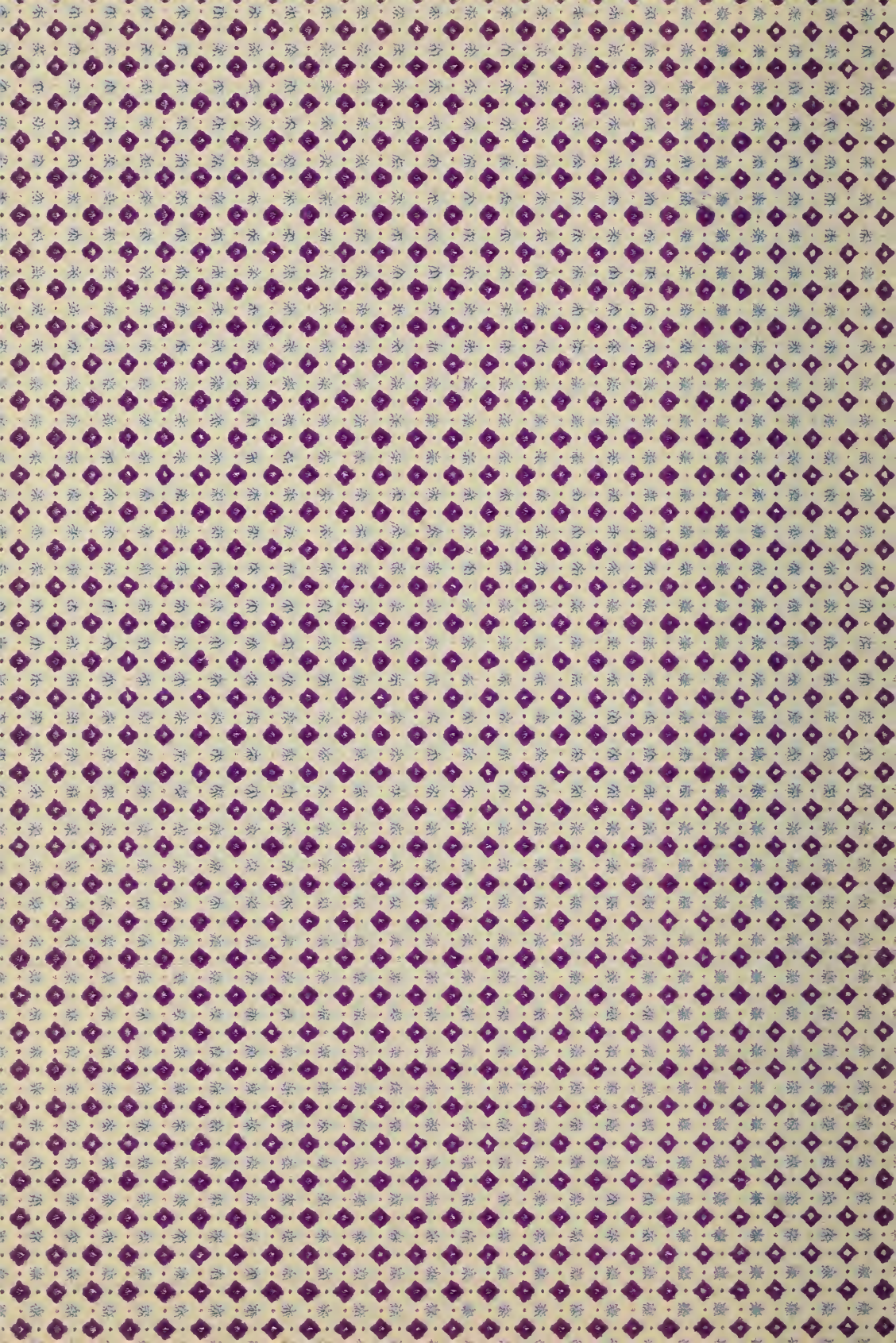
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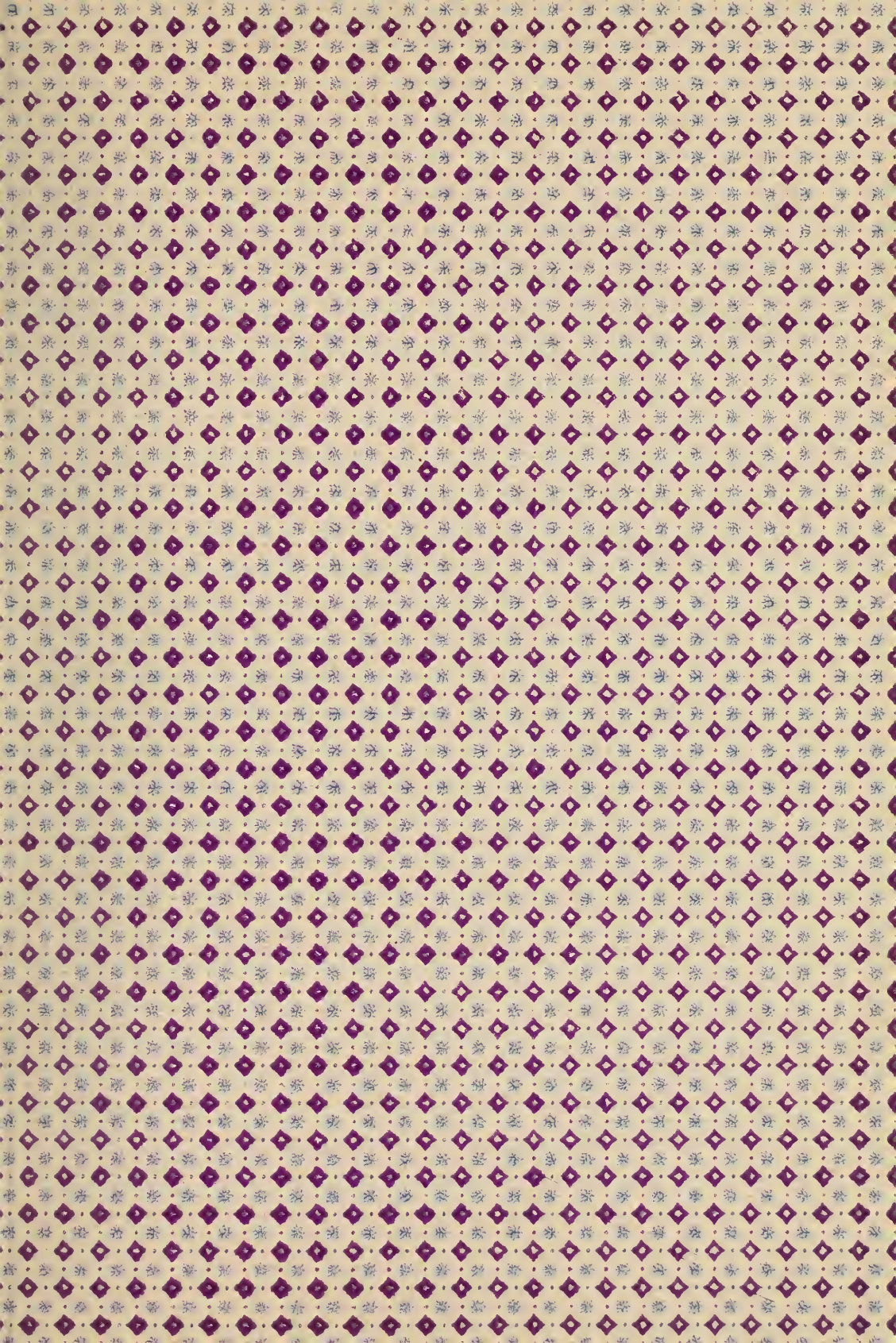
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